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**Some facts about alcohol** you might want to discuss with teenagers are often surprising to adults:

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## NEW IDEAS

*To the editors:*
I found your two chiding references to Gary Hart's "new ideas" triply ironic ("Bad Ideas And Good," TNR, December 3). After disparaging Mr. Hart's incipient policy institute, you go on to agree with the major premise of his Presidential campaign—that Democrats must challenge standard solutions because "nostalgia is not a policy." Then your list of six "new, good ideas" contains two that only he, among all the Presidential candidates, advocated: workplace democracy, which he said "creates more profits, more jobs, and more growth," and free TV time for candidates, which "ensures [candidates'] messages can be gotten out without special-interest money."

As a former adviser to Mr. Hart's campaign, I'd be the first to acknowledge that these proposals were not widely covered by a media more interested in images than issues, so TNR probably never knew about them. But that's precisely why it's a cheap shot to disparage someone who, however imperfectly, tried more than any other national candidate in recent memory to talk about issues. Hence, irony No. 3: the media that ignores Mr. Hart's discussion of ideas says, in postmortems, that he had none.

On a policy institute: would TNR prefer that Democrats of Mr. Hart's stature start PACs instead—that is, that they search for funds instead of new policies?

MARK GREEN
*Democracy Project*
*New York, New York*

*To the editors:*
In your collection of worthwhile ideas for the Democratic Party, you have made a wise choice by including worker ownership. Even wiser was your judgment that the idea of control be linked to that ownership. The great majority of worker ownership plans in place in this country are paternalistic—designed to shield workers from the rights and responsibilities afforded conventional owners.

The progressive potential of the worker ownership idea lies in creating realistic and competitive, but democratically controlled, enterprises. "Second-class" worker ownership, of the kind dominant in this country to date, ought not to be seen as an instrument of democratic reform but instead as a mere affirmation of the status quo.

CHRISTOPHER MACKIN
*Somerville, Massachusetts*

## REICH'S WRONGS

*To the editors:*
Robert B. Reich dismisses a very good idea in his article "Japan Inc., U.S.A." (TNR, November 26). That is the "reorganization of American capitalism toward worker ownership." I will agree the prospects are "highly remote" for even a modest move in this direction. Nevertheless the establishment of a federal fund along the lines of the Reconstruction Finance Corp. to help increase worker ownership might create gentle pressure to lessen the unnecessary conflict between American management and labor, and thereby increase our international competitiveness.

DAVID C. MECKLER
*Dayton, Ohio*

*Mr. Reich replies:*
Worker ownership is an idea whose time will come. But if we merely wait for it, and do nothing else, we'll watch our productive capacity erode. Let's encourage worker ownership; let's also directly encourage investments in our workers' training and experience.

## DEBT DEBATE

*To the editors:*
TRB's column "Forgive Us Our Debts" (TNR, November 26) was right on the money except for one remark: that supply-siders want Paul Volcker and the Federal Reserve to let President Reagan off the hook by expanding the money supply to accommodate his deficits. If the supply-siders had their way, they would get Paul Volcker out of the picture altogether by linking the supply of money to gold. This, they believe, would ensure the value of the dollar and permit entrepreneurs to make sound economic decisions undistorted by inflation.

What would happen, however, is that our worsening trade deficit, payable in gold, would cause gold to flow out of the country, reduce the domestic money supply, reduce spending and employment at home, and produce a greater domestic budget deficit.

WILLIAM C. PERKINS
*Mahwah, New Jersey*

## LUCKY LYNDON

*To the editors:*
"The LaRouche Connection" (TNR, November 19) was a valuable service. High-level government officials should have no business whatever with this demented organization. However, I would like to add one counter-example that Dennis King and Ronald Radosh could not have known about. In 1981, when I was a senior policy adviser at the White House, a politically experienced Reagan aide learned that a prominent Democratic Congressman was to appear as a luncheon speaker at a LaRouchian event. A call was made to the House Republican leader's office, suggesting that the Democrat be told what kind of organization he had agreed to speak for. This was done, and the Democrat abruptly canceled his appearance. The White House and Republican leader's office did this, even though the Congressman's appearance at the LaRouchian event might have been used against him in the coming election. It is too bad that such recognition of the true nature of the LaRouche organization did not pervade the White House more thoroughly, although the article does not convince me that any significant damage has been done.

JOHN MCCLAUGHRY
*Concord, Vermont*

*To the editors:*
Investigative jounalism at times bears high concomitant costs. Twelve pages of "The LaRouche Connection" does for LaRouche's demagoguery what newsprint has repeatedly done for Qaddafi. Anyone for benign neglect?

ELLIOTT A. COHEN
*Pomona, New York*

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.



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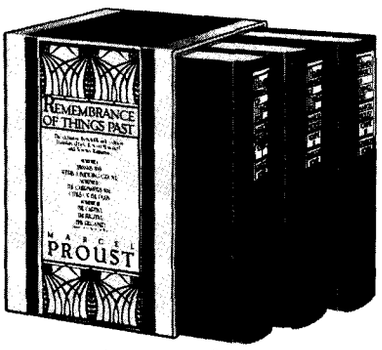


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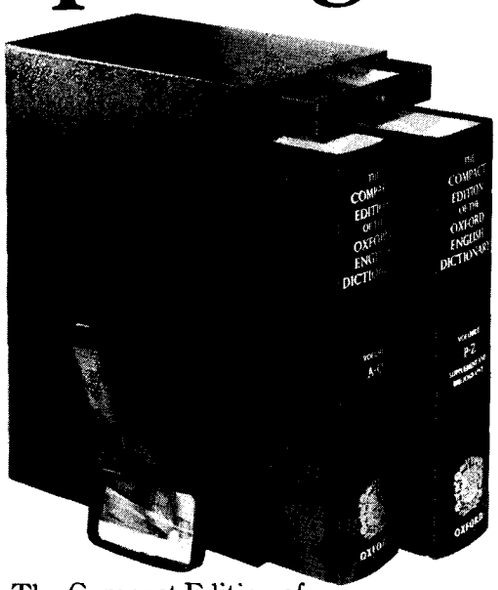

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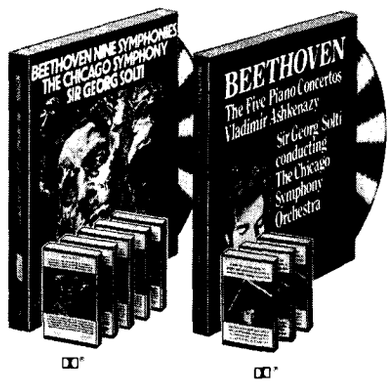
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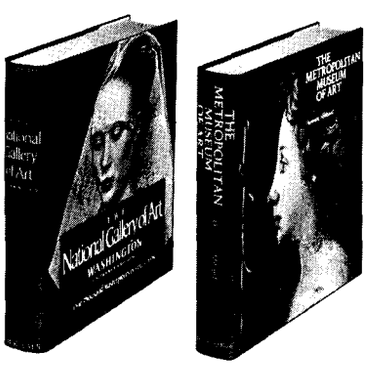


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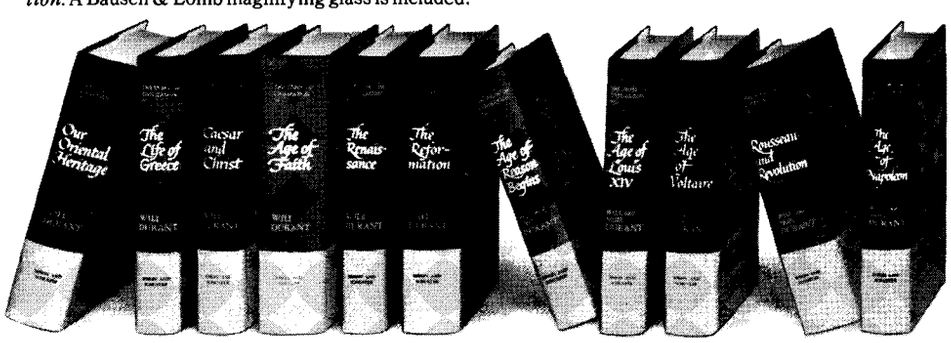


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# TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

## Celebrity Surgery

It was hard luck for NBC News that October's transplant of a baboon heart into a human infant took place at a hospital called "Loma Linda." Tom Brokaw, NBC's anchorman, and Robert Bazell, its science reporter, both have serious trouble with the letter "L," which ruined the enjoyment of this surgical melodrama for many viewers. Someone goofed. Humana Inc., the private hospital chain responsible for November's artificial heart transplant extravaganza, would have changed the name of the hospital before letting anything interfere with the publicity.

Surgery has entered the age of celebrity. Doctors have tasted fame before, and even sought it, but never before has hype been so central. The operation on William Schroeder is what historian Daniel Boorstin calls a "pseudo-event." It exists only for the purpose of being publicized. That's why Humana, which does little medical research, put together the artificial heart team and is prepared to spend $35 million on their project. "Humana's large public relations staff has been busy in recent weeks," *The New York Times* reports, and "arranged for cameras to be focused on Mr. Schroeder during the procedure."

Thus the familiar rituals of publicity are reenacted. Journalists encamp. The nation meets and briefly becomes intimate with a new set of faces behind a new briefing-room lectern. (Or is it the same lectern?) *People* magazine runs exclusive interviews. Soon enough, all that remains is another name or two added to the national stock of dim memories. Baby Fae. Wasn't she one of the hostages in Iran?

Sorry, I don't mean to make light. But really. During the three weeks the nation was mesmerized over the fate of Baby Fae, eighteen other American babies (at the rate of about one in 12,000 live births) probably died of hypoplastic left-heart syndrome, Baby Fae's ailment. The nation did not grieve for them.

Publicized medical dramas take on a somewhat gruesome aspect in the recurring episodes that involve small children awaiting human organs for transplant. The nation conducts a vigil. Will a "suitable donor" arrive in time to save little Mary? What this amounts to is hoping that someone else's little Mary, preferably in perfect health, will be snatched from life in a freakish accident—hoping, that is, for tragedy to strike, so long as it strikes outside the spotlight of publicity. Sometimes it happens, and prayers of thanksgiving are heard across the land.

Most gruesome of all are the occasions when publicity itself determines who will live and who will die. This happens, for example, when distraught parents who know how to play the hype game beat out distraught parents who don't for scarce organs and limited experimental therapies.

One concern raised by ethicists about the Baby Fae case was that the parents were not offered the option of a human heart transplant or a different experimental operation that has shown some signs of success. This is wildly naïve. True enough, Baby Fae was selected for a baboon heart by doctors who were looking for a place to put a baboon heart, not by doctors weighing the best alternatives for Baby Fae. But these other experimental options, like the baboon option, are only available fortuitously. "The conventional therapy," says a specialist, "is to place the babies in a corner and let them die." And the conventional therapy was Baby Fae's real option until the baboon people came along. But the TV cameras changed her situation. Ironically, the doctors were then ready to give Baby Fae a human heart, if one had been available when her baboon heart failed. By becoming famous, she had jumped the queue.

Celebrity patients like Baby Fae and Mr. Schroeder (people who are famous for being sick, that is, not famous people who get sick) are actually participants in a process that is more religious than medical. It is a public sacrament designed to celebrate our society's respect for the value of human life. By going to extremes to extend a few highly publicized symbolic lives, we demonstrate that we value the individual hu-

*continued on page 42*

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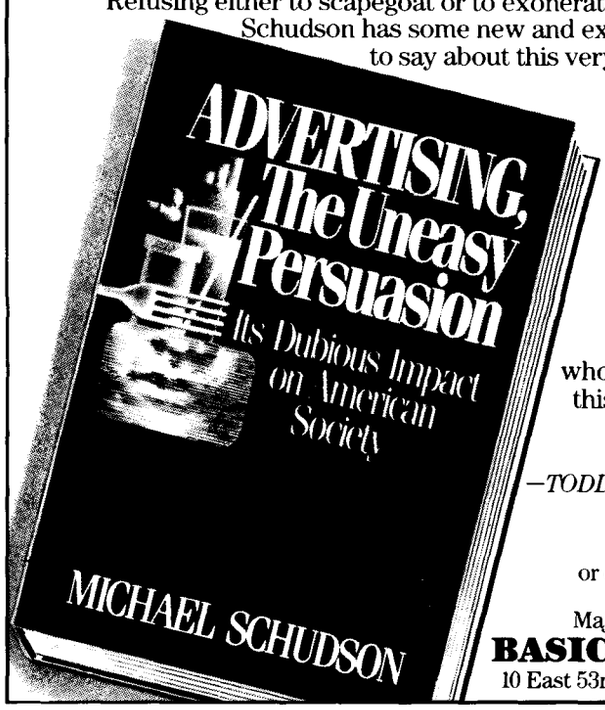


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THE NEW REPUBLIC
DECEMBER 17, 1984

# FEARFUL FAMINE

Ever since mid-October, when the BBC broadcast its wrenching five-minute report on the famine in Ethiopia, followed by NBC's re-broadcast of the report in America, the West has been undergoing one of its periodic episodes of intense concern about starvation in Africa. The concern is justified. Six million people—the very number holds terror—are on the verge of dying in Ethiopia; as many as 300,000 may have died already. Although the main focus has been on the plight of malnourished children and their desperate parents in that one country, the press has made Americans dimly aware that Africa as a whole is undergoing perhaps its worst famine ever. Tens of millions are in danger of dying in thirty different countries, from Mauritania on the west coast to Somalia on the Horn, down through Kenya and Mozambique, and back across the continent to Angola.

The crisis has set off an explosion of private generosity, with contributions pouring into the offices of such organizations as Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, and World Vision USA. It has also evoked the usual responses from politicians. Some, like Tony Hall, a member of Congress from Ohio, have expressed indignation about the contrast between "our" plenty and "their" suffering: "It's unconscionable," he said recently, "that people on the other side of the globe should die of starvation while literally mountains of food pile up in our silos and warehouses." Others, like Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, have accused the Reagan Administration of politically motivated callousness. "The hungry kids [in Marxist-Leninist Ethiopia] are seen by some downtown as 'little commies,' " Leahy said, "so the grain just sits there."

In fact, the whole of the West was tardy in understanding the dimensions of the tragedy besetting Africa, the United States did hesitate in cooperating directly with the Ethiopian government, and aid levels are still inadequate to meet the needs of Africa as a whole. If blame is to be cast, though, much of it should fall on the Ethiopian authorities; and if credit is to be given, some of it should go to the United States, which is providing 50 percent of all the food aid going to Africa. But if the world wants truly to do something about famine, and not merely sputter about it, it will encourage the victim countries to adopt policies—agricultural, economic, and political—that will lessen their vulnerability to future famine.

As *Newsweek* reported in its extensive November 26 cover story on the African famine, the Ethiopian dictator, Mengistu Haile Mariam, was warned of impending famine in 1982 by a team of experts headed by the Oxford University economist Keith Griffin. The Griffin team recommended immediate food rationing and heavy new emphasis on rural development, but Mr. Mengistu ignored its advice. Instead, he continued to devote 46 percent of Ethiopia's G.N.P. to military spending, buying $2.5 billion worth of weapons from his patron, the Soviet Union, which does not offer credit even to its poorest clients. Instead of giving Ethiopian farmers incentives to plant, he collectivized their farms on the Soviet model, ignoring the obvious evidence that the model doesn't work—the Soviet Union's inability to feed itself.

When the famine began, Mr. Mengistu covered it up so as not to spoil the $200 million party he was throwing in September to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his blood-soaked rule. As part of the celebration, Mr. Mengistu officially declared his nation "Marxist-Leninist," and established an Ethiopian Workers' Party to institutionalize his rule. Only after the celebrating was over did he allow foreign journalists to visit the regions where children were dying of starvation by the thousands.

Last year, even before Mr. Mengistu admitted to famine conditions, the U.S. government supplied $35 million to Ethiopia through private voluntary agencies. Some shipments were held up in port because military equipment had priority at the docks. Since October 1, the Reagan Administration has furnished $118 million worth of aid, including 215,000 tons of food, and has established a direct link to the Ethiopian regime. According to a November 17 report from Ethiopia in *The New York Times*, the Soviet bloc has furnished just 30,000 tons of food; the



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Soviet Union itself has provided only 10,000 tons. In thanks for American assistance, the Mengistu regime for the first time has jammed Voice of America broadcasts in the Amharic language, possibly out of fear that his people will be reminded that it was during Ethiopia's last famine that Mr. Mengistu overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie.

Ethiopia's plight has tended to overshadow that of the rest of Africa. As *The New York Times* reported on November 18, Mozambique suffered 100,000 deaths from famine less than a year ago and faces a similar catastrophe this year, yet a desperate shortage of food exists because available aid supplies have been diverted to Ethiopia. While Ethiopia has received $118 million from the United States in the past two months, the rest of Africa has received just $117 million, including $21 million for Mozambique, $23 million for Kenya, and $18 million for the Sudan. The United States already has more than exhausted its $171 billion emergency aid budget for this fiscal year, and a supplemental appropriation will have to be passed when Congress reconvenes.

The present crisis should provoke some serious thinking about what it means to be generous. A provocative primer on this subject was published last month by Earthscan, a group concerned with global development and environmental issues. Entitled *Natural Disasters: Acts of God or Acts of Man?* the report decisively attributes the severity of the suffering that occurs amid droughts, floods, and other disasters to human practices and governmental policies, rather than to "trigger events" such as shortages of water or the overflowing of river banks. Based on data compiled by the International Red Cross, the authors of the study (an Earthscan official named Lloyd Timberlake and Anders Wijkman, the head of the Swedish Red Cross) assert, "Events called 'natural disasters' are killing more and more people every year. Yet there is no evidence that the climatological mechanisms associated with droughts, floods, and cyclones are changing. . . . It is because people are changing their environment to make it more prone to some disasters, and are behaving so as to make themselves more vulnerable to those hazards."

According to the study, overpopulation leads to overcultivation and deforestation of land, making it prone to droughts and floods. In many countries, peasants leave the countryside to live in urban shantytowns located on the sides of hills, where they can be devastated by flooding or earthquakes. Much of the starvation in Sahelian Africa is attributed to political factors. "The peasants who live in arid land have little political power. The governments—civil servants, police, army—are in the capitals. So leaders like to keep aid in the capitals—whether it be food aid or . . . projects that generate employment. For the same political reasons, Sahelian governments have a policy of providing cheap food to urban centers. So subsistence farmers rarely produce extra food to sell in the market—because the selling price does not pay for the fertilizer or better seed they need to increase production." And the authors (as they acknowledge) barely touch upon the gravest of all political problems in Africa and the rest of the Third World—the civil wars that have raged ever since colonial rule was cast off.

The Earthscan study declares that, in cases of "natural disaster," the kind of disaster relief currently being extended to Ethiopia and other African countries "may not be the most charitable, efficient, or most cost-effective means of alleviating human suffering. It can, even, do more harm than good," leading to corruption, dependency, long-term disruption of the national economy, and avoidance of reform. Earthscan proposes that Western countries redirect their attention and aid programs toward disaster-prevention in the form of long-term development—reforestation, education, and improvement of agricultural methods. The study does not recommend political change, but it seems obvious that politics is at the heart of the misery besetting nation after Third World nation: the prevalence of the one-party state-"socialist" governmental model; the grotesque militarization of society and economy; the adoption of an urbanizing, high-tech, capital-intensive, high-prestige model of development that is often utterly inappropriate to local social, cultural, economic, and environmental conditions.

Rather than accepting that model as a reality, the Reagan Administration has been urging the Third World to look to capitalism as its way out of poverty. But the rhetoric of the Chamber of Commerce is only slightly more likely to get results than the rhetoric of the Third International. As the examples of Nigeria and Zaire demonstrate, unfettered "capitalism" has its drawbacks as surely as does fettered "socialism." What the Third World needs is less in the way of imported ideological panaceas and more in the way of development aid that reduces, rather than increases, chronic dependency.

## NOTEBOOK

□ JEFFREY L. DEARTH, we are happy to tell the world, joins THE NEW REPUBLIC this week as Publisher. For the past three years Mr. Dearth was at *Smithsonian* magazine, where he was promotion director and most recently marketing director. His experience also includes stints at *Time* in New York, London, and Paris, and at the European edition of *Vision*, a business monthly. In addition, Nancy E. Miller joins us as Assistant to the Editors, while Laura E. Obolensky becomes Editorial-Corporate Coordinator.

□ FORTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The world today stands at a crossroads. Mr. Churchill's path leads to power politics, imperialism, spheres of influence and more and more war. The other path leads to democracy, peace and freedom. It is for people of good will throughout the world to fight, and fight hard, for the second road." ("The Churchill Tragedy," The Editors, December 18, 1944.)



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Nicaragua's democrats abandoned.

# CRUZ CONTROL

SOMETIME DURING the brief interlude between President Reagan's reelection and the Nicaraguan MiG scare, it became clear that the Administration had stopped listening to Arturo Cruz. Cruz is the most prominent leader of the democratic opposition to the Sandinista government. When he was demanding last summer that the Sandinistas hold free and fair elections, the Administration supported him. He was a democrat who represented a substantial portion of Nicaraguan society, and the United States, as a function of its support for democracy, stood with him. U.S. policymakers said repeatedly that their policy was not intended to reverse Nicaragua's revolution, only to support the will of the Nicaraguan people, who, they said, were unhappy with the Sandinista regime. But now that Cruz has expressed deep misgivings about the escalating military pressure the U.S. is bringing to bear on the Sandinistas, Administration officials are ignoring him. Cruz's fate holds lessons for those who have put their faith in the sincerity of the Administration's democratic intentions in Central America.

The Administration was right about Cruz: he is a democrat who supported the revolution that threw out Somoza, and many Nicaraguans share his desire to reestablish the pluralist and non-aligned character of that revolution. But Cruz also is haunted by the idea that his country will be plunged back into war so soon after enduring the bloody rebellion against Somoza, which took the lives of 50,000 Nicaraguans. At a press conference in Washington on November 14, he said that the Administration's policy is not serving the cause of democracy in Nicaragua.

The increasingly warlike rhetoric coming out of Washington "is not helpful," Cruz was quoted as saying in *The Washington Post*. In the wake of the MiG scare, U.S. spy planes deliberately set off sonic booms over Nicaraguan territory—a policy, said Cruz, which made him "very, very sad." The Sandinistas responded with a civilian mobilization, a curfew, and a crackdown on dissenters. "The situation diminishes the stamina of the democratic opposition within Nicaragua," Cruz said.

Cruz still believes he can work with Daniel Ortega, the Sandinista leader elected president on November 4 against only nominal opposition, to achieve some measure of national reconciliation. Ortega, he believes, is resisting pressure from hard-line Sandinistas who believe (in ominous harmony with Administration hard-liners) that war is inevitable and negotiations foolish. Cruz doubts Ortega will do enough to achieve national reconciliation. But he still believes, hoping against hope, that in the face of war some genuine accommodation can be reached with the Sandinistas. At the press conference, Cruz urged the Administration to give Ortega "a period of grace" in which to allow further talks.

Administration officials, the armed Nicaraguan opposition, and some of Cruz's civilian allies dismiss that hope as naïve. Maybe it is. But the whole point of supporting Nicaragua's democratic forces was supposedly to ensure that the Nicaraguan people had a voice in running their country. The Administration, at least until the election, always pointed to Cruz's leadership as a symbol of the moderate and democratic character of those forces. If the United States really respected the democratic opposition, its policy would take the convictions of its leader seriously—and not only during reelection campaigns.

Possibly the Administration has decided that Cruz no longer speaks for the democratic forces in Nicaragua. If this is its view, then it ought to say so, and it ought to tell the American public who does speak for those forces. But if this is the Administration's position, it bears an odd resemblance to that of the Sandinistas, who continually denigrate Cruz. In fact, Cruz has demonstrated that he has more support in Nicaragua than any other opposition leader. The U.S. has funded the *contras* for three years, and they have yet to stage any significant activities within Nicaragua, either in political organizing or in insurrectional violence. Cruz went to Nicaragua in August, and despite Sandinista harassment drew thousands of people to a rally in the city of Matagalpa. (See "Nicaragua's Untold Stories," by Robert S. Leiken, TNR, October 8.) We can't be sure that Cruz commands the allegiance of a majority of Nicaraguans—the Sandinistas wouldn't allow the free elections that would have answered the question. But we can be sure that he has more support than anyone whom the Administration is funding.

THE TRUTH IS that the democratic opposition in Nicaragua is far more willing than the Administration to explore reconciliation with the Sandinistas. Besides Cruz there is Virgilio Godoy, a popular Nicaraguan politician who is unknown in the U.S. Godoy served in the Sandinista government for four years, though he is not a Sandinista. He resigned from the government and was nominated by the Liberal Independent Party, which he heads, as its candidate for president. Godoy ultimately boycotted the election because of the same Sandinista repression Cruz faced. Godoy too thinks real reconciliation is possible. Faith in democracy in Nicaragua requires faith in Cruz and Godoy and the movements they lead.

By ignoring Cruz and others like him, the Administration suggests just how much it is inclined to listen to Nicaragua's democrats. It will support them if they want free elections, but not if they want further negotiations with the Sandinistas; it will support them if they press the Sandinistas for genuine political freedoms, but not if they ask the United States to take a less aggressive military stance toward their country. The Administration takes Cruz seriously until the time when the most serious decisions are made. Then he is shut out. The Administration, it seems, puts Nicaraguan democracy in the same category as it does the human embryo: like respect for life, respect for democracy begins at conception and ends at birth. The



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Administration's apparent belief that Cruz must now be ignored, that the time to talk has run out, implies that democracy is too important to be left to the democrats. The pretense of being concerned about the will of the Nicaraguan people has been discarded.

Recent developments reveal a good deal about the democratic and independent character of those Nicaraguan opposition leaders whom the Administration does not ignore. The *contras* announced on November 24 the firing of Edgar Chamorro, one of their leaders. Chamorro's transgression was to publicly criticize the C.I.A. for disowning the so-called "murder manual" that the agency had supplied to the *contras*. Chamorro had the nerve to admit that assassination was indeed what the manual taught. He was, in the words of Adolfo Calero, the *contras*' civilian leader, "a loose cannon."

But before he was shown the door, Chamorro revealed that only three *contra* leaders have decision-making powers, and, not coincidentally, they are the only three in contact with the C.I.A. They are: Calero, his personal assistant, and Enrique Bermudez, the military commander. Last March Chamorro told the Mexican magazine *Tiempo* that the Somocista influence had been purged from the *contra* organization. He said, "Colonel Bermudez has strictly military responsibilities and is the movement's prime military authority, but he is subordinate to the civilian members." Bermudez, a twenty-five-year veteran of Somoza's National Guard who later served as a military attaché in the Nicaraguan Embassy in Washington, seems to have regained power and access to the Administration at exactly the same time that Cruz was losing it.

THIS IS in keeping with the Administration's consistent record over the last three years of aiding only Nicaraguans whom it can control. Edén Pastora, the charismatic and erratic former Sandinista who clings stubbornly to a vision of a Nicaragua independent of both superpowers, received only crumbs from the C.I.A. before being cut off completely last summer. Arturo Cruz has not heard a friendly peep from the Administration since the election. And now Edgar Chamorro has been given his walking papers because he admits what the Administration chastely denies: that the United States is willing to employ terrorism in the war against the Sandinistas. The tolerance for deviations from the Reagan line in Nicaragua seems to be diminishing.

Three conclusions about Nicaragua are warranted, and one is not. The unwarranted conclusion is that the Sandinistas are the rightful stewards of the country's future. The Reagan policy does not change the fact that the Sandinistas are a Marxist-Leninist party whose leaders' attitudes toward political liberty range from tactical acceptance to total contempt. (Those who doubt this view should read David Nolan's careful study, *The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, published by the University of Miami.)

The first of the conclusions that are warranted is that the Reagan Administration has used Arturo Cruz and those others who want to redeem Nicaragua's revolution to advance the cause of Enrique Bermudez and those who want to reverse it. The second is that if Cruz and the true democratic opposition are to have any influence on the deteriorating situation in Nicaragua, the Administration's policy must be radically changed. (Cruz proposes that the Administration's support for the *contras* be ended as part of an overall political settlement.) The third is that because any such radical policy change is unlikely, liberals and others who support democracy for Nicaragua may well be obliged to decide in the next four years whether or not to give their support to a direct U.S. military intervention against the Sandinistas—an intervention in which the loser would be hope of democracy, the winner one of two competing forms of tyranny.

**JEFFERSON MORLEY**

Ceauşescu looks West but acts East.

# RUMANIAN GYMNASTICS

*Bucharest*

WHILE CROWDS in Los Angeles were cheering Rumania's Olympic athletes, back home in Bucharest President Nicolae Ceauşescu was blasting a neighborhood of nineteenth-century houses into oblivion. Orthodox churches in the vicinity were plundered by security forces beforehand, and according to diplomats, some residents were given only a few hours' notice to clear out with all their life possessions before the explosives went off. Rumanians now call the blast site, where a civic center is to be built, "Ceaushima." The civic center, a monstrosity-to-be of apartment blocks and austere public buildings, to use President Ceauşescu's own words, is part of "the passage from the bourgeois-landlord society to the multilaterally developed Socialist society."

Rumania has earned an individualist reputation in foreign affairs because of its seeming independence on the disarmament issue, its unwillingness to participate in Warsaw Pact field maneuvers, and its relatively strong trade relationship with the West. But in fact, under Ceauşescu, Rumania has become increasingly bound to the Soviet Union. As each year passes, the Rumania of the 1980s is looking more and more like the Soviet Union of the 1930s: canals are being dug, factories built, and forests cleared for industrial complexes, many of little long-term value and all involving a great human cost. Authoritative sources tell of countless lives being lost during construction of the Danube-Black Sea canal over the last decade, in which prison labor from the "Rumanian Gulag" was reportedly used. Moreover, with food and other commodities scarce for the third straight year, heating and hot



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water drastically reduced, electric outlets cemented shut, an "official diet" proclaimed, and the dim, umber streets of Bucharest crowded with armed militiamen, Saul Bellow's nightmare vision of Rumania—*The Dean's December*, published in 1981—is already in need of an update. "The spirit of our people requires economic independence, and our population is paying the price. We never promised our people a rose garden," a Rumanian official told me on a previous visit.

Admittedly, Ceauşescu's brutal measures have been effective in reducing the national debt from $10 billion in 1981 to $8 billion this year, and the country's credit rating has improved as a result. But Rumanian officials have publicly indicated that they intend to cease borrowing from Western banks anyway. That resolve, coupled with Ceauşescu's religious-like devotion to Stalinist principles of central planning, dooms Rumania to a future of ever-increasing trade with the Eastern bloc and the Third World. Thus, at a time when other countries in Eastern Europe are diversifying their economies to attract hard currency from the West, Rumania is going the other way. Bilateral trade with the Soviet Union has gone up by over 25 percent in recent years. Instead of "economic independence," as the official claimed, this country of 23 million has for some time been falling under the economic control of the superpower to its north and east.

THE DIE was cast last June, at the time of the Comecon Summit in Moscow and the meeting there between President Ceauşescu and Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko. While the media was preoccupied with Rumania's decision to attend the Olympics, Ceauşescu, desperate for cheap raw materials—especially oil, to keep his obsolete refining complex at Ploiesti a going concern—was striking a deal. Much of it is still not clear to diplomats in Bucharest and elsewhere, but the picture that is beginning to emerge looks like this: Rumania will invest in the extraction of Soviet gas, coal, other energy resources, and iron ore for use into the 1990s and beyond; and it will be getting Soviet oil at below-market prices. As one expert explained it, Ceauşescu has apparently come to the conclusion that Rumania's failure to invest in Soviet oil in earlier years—for the sake of economic independence—was a mistake. To avoid further austerity measures, which might raise the specter of civilian unrest, he now believes that he has no choice but to link his economy closer to Comecon.

The price for this help from the Soviet Union will be concessions in other spheres. Ceauşescu has reportedly agreed to intensify "coordination" between the Communist parties of the two countries. This means more high-level exchanges and more Russian access to Rumanian ruling circles. Most importantly, Rumania has acquiesced to further integration into the military framework of the Warsaw Pact.

Though Rumania does not permit Warsaw Pact field exercises on its territory, its positions on bilateral maneuvers and foreign troops passing through the country is less clear. (Some diplomats say that Russian troops crossed Rumania on their way to Warsaw Pact exercises in Bulgaria last spring.) There are signs that Rumania may be starting to build a road and railway network in the Danube Delta to enable Soviet forces to pass through the country more conveniently in the future. Though Rumanian field units are not fully integrated into the pact's framework, all other branches of its military—from signal units to aerial defense—are. Finally, Ceauşescu has reportedly allowed joint maneuvers on Rumanian soil. Some diplomats here see much significance in these developments, but others caution that the West may just be waking up to a rude reality which has been glossed over for years. The idea of an "independent" Rumanian foreign policy is "patently fraudulent," said a Rumanian-speaking diplomat.

CLEARLY THE REASON Ceauşescu is allowed so many apostasies is because he represents no threat to the Russians. Unlike East Germany, Rumania is not located on the fringes of the empire. And unlike Poland, it is not on the main supply route to front-line troops in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Nor is there civil unrest in Rumania, as there is in Poland. Boxed in between the Soviets to the north and the Bulgarians to the south, and with the traditional Magyar enemy to the northwest, Rumania is not going to "get away." The Russians have the country wired from top to bottom: the Soviet Embassy staff alone in Bucharest is reputed to number fifteen hundred. And as the Russians stretch their tentacles farther, through trade and party contacts, Ceauşescu's foreign policy forays will represent even less of a menace. "The Olympics was the joker in the pack," said one resident diplomat, pointing out that as an issue without defined strategic importance, it is a transgression the Soviets can tolerate. (Rumania's missile policy is tolerated for a different reason: it is Soviet missile policy in gypsy clothes. Although Ceauşescu has put forth compromise proposals on deployment, none of them has contained anything that betrays Soviet objectives.)

The truth is that Ceauşescu's is one of Eastern Europe's most corrupt and nepotic regimes. Dozens of his relatives are in high positions of power, and the security police turn a blind eye to wholesale black marketeering by wealthy Arab students. (Rumania may be one of the few countries in the world where students drive Mercedeses to school and doctors and lawyers take the trolley to work.) C. L. Sulzberger wrote of King Carol's regime in the 1930s, "If ever a land deserved a revolution it was Rumania." The same could be said of the country today. Several Latin-style military coups have been attempted since 1971. But for one to succeed, it would probably need Russian connivance—an unlikely occurrence. Far from a bold maverick, Ceauşescu—who reigns over a Marxist banana republic of his own making—is a bird singing loudly in a cage.

**ROBERT D. KAPLAN**

Robert D. Kaplan is an Athens-based correspondent for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and ABC Radio News.



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Why growth and democracy stall in the Third World.

# THE DEVELOPMENT DELUSION

## BY ELIE KEDOURIE

THE USE OF the terms "development" and "underdevelopment" is now common in the discussion of political and particularly economic issues. To use either of the terms immediately sets up in our mind a comparison and an implicit expectation. The comparison is between countries that are said to be developed and those that are said to be underdeveloped. And what the terms implicitly assume and convey is that countries which are now underdeveloped can attain a state in which they are developed. Underdeveloped countries aspire to become one day developed, believe that they can take action in order to do so, that the aspiration is not foolish, and that a strategy exists which can lead them to such a state.

The ideal to which these countries aspire is that of a prosperous, stable, democratic society. The prosperity is usually believed to rest on manufacturing industry, because it is held that the developed world became rich precisely through industrialization. We may or may not personally believe that such an ideal is worth attaining. We must, however, keep in mind that only in very recent times has this ideal received the suffrages of large numbers of people; and that the great religions of the world, monotheistic and pantheistic alike, recommended quite another goal to humanity—whether it be personal salvation or the absorption of the individual in an all-encompassing Godhead. We may also entertain varying estimates about the possibility of some of these so-called underdeveloped countries eventually becoming "developed." But whatever our estimate, there seem to be many reasons to believe that the very attempt to realize a developed state, if seriously undertaken, will bring about numerous and serious political predicaments, from which it will not be easy to escape.

In the *Politics*, Aristotle discusses two desirable characteristics to look for in a polity. The first is that rule should be for the benefit of the governed, that a polity should not suffer arbitrary and self-interested rule by the one or the few over the many, or of the many over the few. The second is stability. Aristotle himself is enormously impressed by the virtue and importance of political stability, believing—perhaps optimistically, since he did not live to see how pure evil became incarnate in the Nazi regime—that no polity is so devoid of goodness that its preservation is not worth some effort.

Stability is indeed universally considered to be a necessary requisite in any political order—whether this order is associated with constitutional and representative government, or with so-called Oriental despotism, in which (to adopt Karl Wittfogel's classic formulation) the state is stronger than society. There are many ways of accounting for the importance of political stability. We may say, for instance, with St. Augustine that man's profoundest aspiration is peace—peace with God, with himself, and with the world. But to be at peace, with the world at any rate, requires that the world which man has made for himself should not change too violently and too frequently. If there is violent and frequent change, then the process itself becomes cumulative. Frequent and violent change produces, for some time, at any rate, change even more frequent and violent, or else a lively and overmastering fear of such a change.

This cumulative process—and the savage fears it elicits—is the simplest and most satisfactory explanation of why a revolution, however laudable its ends, however crying the grievances it sets out to remedy, can never stop when it has swept away what it had set out to abolish, and why the familiar saying that the revolution devours its children is so terribly true. This saying originated in the Terror that speedily engulfed the high hopes raised by the French Revolution of 1789, but it has also proved to be true of the Bolshevik Revolution, and the revolutions in China, Cambodia, and the Middle East—both in relation to the Syrian and Iraqi Baath, and to the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

If, then, a society comes to look upon itself as underdeveloped, and comes to set up for itself an ideal it believes is possible to achieve through human action, conscious and planned, then we would not be wrong to expect that such a society would be in a continuous state of effervescence, and its political stability continuously threatened by the expectant state of mind of its members, who have come to believe that change must ensue, and that out of change good will also, infallibly, ensue.

A situation of this kind arose in Europe in the decades preceding the French Revolution of 1789. Enlightened thinkers came to believe that they had resolved the enigma of human nature, penetrated the springs of human action, and solved the riddle of history. In their own interest

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A version of this essay appears in *The Crossman Confessions and Other Essays in Politics, History and Religion*, to be published this month by Mansell Publishing Ltd. (London) and H. W. Wilson (New York).



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kings and priests had combined to establish the reign of superstition and despotism. Superstition once banished, corrupt and despotic forms of government would be reformed and humanity would attain an era of happiness. The enlightened absolutists who imbibed these ideas came to think that, with the help of this new science of human nature, they could now so legislate and administer that their permissions and prohibitions, and their improvement of institutions, would inaugurate a new era in which human happiness would be assured and human progress become practically limitless. These new hopes created in the educated and official classes a predisposition to welcome change and to expect to see social and political institutions continually questioned and reformed. This state of mind so widely prevalent in 1789 ensured a wide welcome for the French Revolution at its beginnings, and, for instance, gave the poet Wordsworth the feeling that it was bliss to be then alive, and to be young very heaven. Similar, though perhaps not quite as strong and tumultuous, feelings accompany the pursuit of development today, and we must therefore entertain very seriously the thought that political instability is, implicitly, inseparable from the pursuit of this ideal.

THE IDEAL of an industrial, prosperous, democratic society is not indigenous to the countries of Asia and Africa, to which the term underdeveloped principally applies. On the contrary, it originated in a civilization quite alien to them. Furthermore, in those societies that are supposed to approximate this ideal, enormous technical and scientific resources exist which alone make an industrial civilization possible. In Western Europe and North America, the present state of economy and society did not come about as a result of people conceiving an ideal or a plan and setting about to realize them. It came about in unpremeditated fashion, more or less gradually, facilitated by increasing numbers of men with scientific curiosity. When these scientists made their discoveries, they could have had no idea of the enormous practical significance of these discoveries.

That this scientific endeavor came to practical fruition is, of course, in large part due to a social structure in which an entrepreneurial and mercantile middle class had significant political power and was increasingly at liberty to pursue its economic aims. Even under such favorable conditions, the transformation of West European and North American society into its present state was by no means an easy matter. The so-called industrial revolution, great as its material benefits proved to be, has created formidable stresses and strains in the body politic. It brought into being an urban industrial proletariat which had migrated from the countryside and suffered in the factories and slums of industrial cities cultural disorientation and spiritual poverty. Only gradually did municipal facilities and housing stock grow and improve, so that living in these modern urban conditions became tolerable, and urban neighborhoods lost their forbidding and alienating character. Again the Western revolution of industry brought about problems of the trade cycle, economic crises and depressions quite new in their widespread intensity; masses who had come to depend on regular factory employment suddenly—and to them inexplicably—found themselves workless and utterly without resources, the disinherited stepsons, so to speak, of industrial society.

IF SUCH WAS the situation in the Western world, where the industrial process and industrial skills were indigenous, what may we expect when decades of Western experience and experimentation are abridged into a number of slogans or maxims or recipes, and abruptly introduced into societies to whom they must be profoundly incomprehensible? What are these societies, by and large? They are traditional agricultural societies where for very long periods the tempo of change in the conditions of life as well as in the general outlook was so slow as to be imperceptible.

For many complex reasons, in the last hundred years or so these areas have found themselves undergoing a tremendous increase in population, the rate of the increase itself becoming greater with the passage of time. The orders of magnitude are eloquent enough. In 1882 the population of Egypt was under 7 million. In 1982 it was about 40 million. In the 1950s the natural rate of increase per thousand of population in Ceylon was between 25 and 28 (in France it was between 6 and 7, in the U.K. around 4.5, and in the United States between 15 and 16). A consequence of these high figures in "underdeveloped" countries is that a high proportion of the population is very young, say 40 percent under 14 and two-thirds under 30. In other words, a very large proportion of the population is not within the productive age range. By contrast, in Western industrialized societies, earners constitute the majority of the population; and their productivity has served to keep themselves, as well as the older and the younger generation, at an adequate standard of living, and to endow the young with the social capital represented by technical skills, scientific knowledge, and professional know-how to enable them in their turn to provide for themselves and increase the general wealth. An increase in population such as that of the United States in the 1950s—15 per 1,000—is a blessing, while the higher increases in Egypt, India, Ceylon, or China are a drag on the society and a cause of increasing impoverishment, since even when the young reach a productive age, there is no opportunity for them to produce. Hence the phenomenon of perpetual unemployment, which afflicts a very large proportion of the population of these "underdeveloped" countries.

There is one particular aspect of this overpopulation that also must be noticed: the great and growing increase in the size of cities, which is very unlike the increase that cities like London or New York or Manchester or Los Angeles have experienced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In these cases the increase in population was an index of the increase in industry and in employment opportunities generally. And sooner or later, the housing stock and the municipal facilities increased in order to



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keep pace with the growth of population. Cities in the underdeveloped world are by no means centers of industry that can offer a livelihood to the enormous numbers of people who flock to them from the countryside. Cairo at the outbreak of the Second World War had fewer than 1.5 million inhabitants. Today it has 10 or 12 million, or perhaps more. No one imagines that opportunities of employment, the housing stock, or the facilities have kept pace. What is true of Cairo is also true of Tehran, Istanbul, Bombay, Calcutta, and many others.

This inordinate growth of cities, this "over-urbanization," has countless repercussions on the lives of the inhabitants and on their governance—consequences that thwart efforts to realize the ideal of development. In the cities of the underdeveloped world, the traditional structure of the extended or patriarchal family has been disrupted, and with it the traditional religions that gave meaning and coherence to life, and bound the generations together. With the disruption of the traditional family and the loss in prestige and credibility which traditional beliefs have suffered, a wide gap has opened between the young and the old, with the old uncomprehending and ridiculed, and the young disoriented, dissatisfied, open to the lure of slogans and eager to follow whatever path promises a way out of the blind alley in which they find themselves. Gamal Abdel Nasser's *Philosophy of the Revolution*, Abol-Hassan Bani-Sadr's Islamic economics, Sadeq Hedayat's fiction, Nirad Chaudhuri's *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* and *Among the Believers* are so many reports, direct and indirect, on the moral and intellectual condition of the underdeveloped world. And we have to ask if the state of mind of a young man dabbling in terrorism like Nasser, or Bani-Sadr's Pol-Potian ideals, or the Calcutta students seduced by Gandhian demagogy, or the systematic de-schooling advocated and practiced by Muslim fundamentalists in Indonesia can possibly help to further the development.

THE IDEAL of development aspires to a society that is not only prosperous but also democratic. This democratic ideal implies a state of affairs in which there is personal freedom regulated by impersonal law. It implies governments responsive to the desires and opinions of the governed, and responsible to them. A government regulated by law and responsible to the body politic is a constitutional government, and constitutionalism is a more precise appellation for this kind of government than the term democracy—a word which is now a victim of verbicide. Constitutionalism, as is well known, derives its reality and vitality not simply from the suffrage and parliamentary arrangements. It is underpinned by a social structure that contains a multitude of interests, none of which is able to overrule or ride roughshod over one another. This mutual checking and balancing of divergent interests gives reality to the checks and balances of a constitutional manner of governing.

How does this democratic ideal fit in with the political inheritance of undeveloped countries? By and large these countries share one or another of two political traditions. China, India, and the Islamic Middle East belong to the tradition of Oriental despotism; in black Africa the tradition is that of tribal rule, in which an immemorial and divinely sanctioned custom is deemed to regulate the behavior of the members of the tribe, and to guide the actions of the tribal chiefs and the elders who assist and advise them. Tribal rule can be described as primitive government. Primitive is not to be understood in a pejorative sense, but only to indicate that here is a kind of government that is not intricate in its arrangements and that has shown it does not possess any great powers of resistance when it is faced with more sophisticated kinds of political and military organizations.

This is not the case with Oriental despotism, which the record shows to be one of the most intricate, most efficient, and most lasting of political organizations. Where Oriental despotism exists, political sociology is extremely simple: there are two social groups, those who are ruled and those who rule; there is a population which works, produces, and pays taxes; and there is a ruling institution quite separate from it, which extracts the taxes, imposes law and order, and engages in warfare.

Marx's dictum about the relation between economic and political power is here diametrically reversed. You do not attempt to find out who owns the means of production in order to find out who is the government. On the contrary, you ascertain where political and military power lies, and it will then become apparent that economic power is nonexistent, that riches are vanity, and that property has no security. It is in this sense that in Oriental despotism the state is stronger than society, that there is no interest in society that can withstand the demands of the ruling institution. Hence, the significance of the fact that feudalism as a political arrangement is absent.

AS IS well known, control of land in the feudal age in Western Europe meant that a state of affairs arose in which the king as a feudal monarch was bound to seek counsel and consent from the vassals, that feudalism became an intricate network of rights and obligations. This network of interests mutually checking one another is fundamental to the rise of constitutionalism in Western Europe, and constitutionalism, as I have said, is inherently a matter of checks and balances. The story told of a Chinese general could never have been told of a Western magnate. This general was accused of plotting against the Emperor. In order to exculpate himself and to prove that he had absolutely no interest in politics, the general pointed to the fact that his one consuming passion was the accumulation of property in land. Hence also the precariousness of private property in Oriental despotism, where wealth can be confiscated or bestowed at the caprice of the ruler, and where to be known to be a man of substance can invite sudden and utter ruin.

Again, in contrast with the West, there is in Oriental despotism an utter absence of free municipal institutions, and, in general, of autonomous associations devoted to



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promoting within the law the interests of their members. Trade guilds have existed, of course, but they always were mistrusted and closely controlled by the ruler. When Oriental despotisms were rejuvenated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by the methods and precepts of European enlightened absolutism, and subsequently of Leninism, the traditional guilds wilted and died in the scorching blaze of centralizing power.

MUNICIPALITIES, municipal institutions, and organs of village self-government are prominent by their absence in the world of Oriental despotism. *Omdas* in Egypt or *mukhtars* in the Ottoman Empire or village elders elsewhere do not represent villages in which they reside, but rather act as the agents of authority. They are responsible not to the villagers, but to the ruler. They are there to ensure the good behavior of those whom they oversee. Village assemblies are also known to have existed in India and China, but such organisms were politically irrelevant, since there was no mechanism whereby the wishes and views of such assemblies could regularly be conveyed to the central authorities, let alone be taken into account or acted upon. British officials in India thought to build on the presumed tradition of Indian village assemblies in order to prepare Indians for parliamentary self-government. But institutions of local government in India proved a dismal failure, and in no way engaged the interest or the enthusiasm of those whom they were intended to benefit.

In Oriental despotism, then, there is a great barrier fixed between those in the official class and those not in the official class. Power sits in formidable and solitary eminence, and the ordinary subject can only aspire to escape the attentions of authority. In a story in *The Thousand and One Nights* a man comes back from work in the evening and finds a corpse near his door. He is terrified to report his discovery to the police lest they accuse him of murder. He carries the corpse and puts it over the wall into a neighbor's garden. The neighbor discovers the body and is likewise terrified; he in turn transfers it to his neighbor's property where the same story is repeated, and so on. The body ends by perambulating through the whole town without anybody daring to make public its existence.

If power sits on an eminence cut off from the rest of the population, the supreme power is likewise isolated from its servants by a wall of reciprocal mistrust and fear. *Mirrors of Princes* and similar writings abound in advice to rulers and those near them about the best means of protecting their lives and safeguarding their positions. The Indian Kautilya, in the latter part of the first millennium B.C.E., advises the ruler on how to take precautions against poisoning, and tells him that the king should spy on his prime minister, that he should beware of his close friends, his wives, his brothers, his heir apparent, and his progeny in general. "Princes like crabs," says Kautilya, "have a notorious tendency of eating up their begetter." A Persian mirror of princes advises the vizier that "should the ruler at any time pretend to you that you are completely secure with him, begin from that moment to feel insecure; if you are being fattened by someone, you may expect very quickly to be slaughtered by him."

This is clearly not the world of Mrs. Thatcher or President Reagan; nor is it something utterly remote, dead, and gone. We recognize this world as a world that exists here and now, the world, in fact, in which the great part of humanity finds itself—Stalin's world, Mao's world, Nasser's world, a world from which escape is a vain and delusive hope. Oriental despotism has in fact been given a new lease on life, and endowed with enhanced powers by all the new technologies of communications, indoctrination, and mass control which are the offshoots of Western scientific innovation, and which have spread to the whole world.

For the world of Oriental despotism, then, the political ideal that forms part of the notion of development is not to be realized. And insofar as economic development and constitutionalism seem to go hand in hand, we may perhaps also conclude that the modernized and rejuvenated system of Oriental despotism must also stand in the way of economic development itself, that the economic modernization in which all these regimes are feverishly and ostensibly involved amounts (to adopt the eloquent title of Galal Amin's book) to no more than the modernization of poverty.

IN THE OTHER political tradition of the underdeveloped world—that of tribal rule—there is no state apparatus that is stronger than society. Here are warrior chiefs assisted and counseled by elders, rudimentary political arrangements, an openness of relations between leader and led such that the poorest tribesman could address King Ibn Sa'ud as Ya Abd al-'Aziz! The record, however, shows, in the first place, that it is not true, as used to be argued by romantic historians, that constitutional representative government has its origins in the forests of Germany, or among the Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula. Tribal self-government is primitive government and cannot sustain the sophisticated legal structure crucial to constitutional representative government. In the second place, the record shows that tribal self-government cannot withstand assault by more solidly and intricately organized political structures. Owing to the fact that their military means were limited and their empires far-flung, Oriental despotisms were not always able to submit to their authority nomadic tribes within their territories. But once modern weapons and communications became available, nomads were hardly in a position to resist, and their tribal institutions have been superseded. And even when administrators like Lyautey in Morocco or Lugard in Nigeria strive to preserve indigenous institutions by instituting what is called indirect rule, these very attempts at conservation drain life and significance out of what had been—within its limits—a viable political system.

Indirect rule transforms tribal institutions into museum pieces. Again, tribal rule itself may change into more complex and more powerful political organizations. But these more complex organizations have evinced no tendency to



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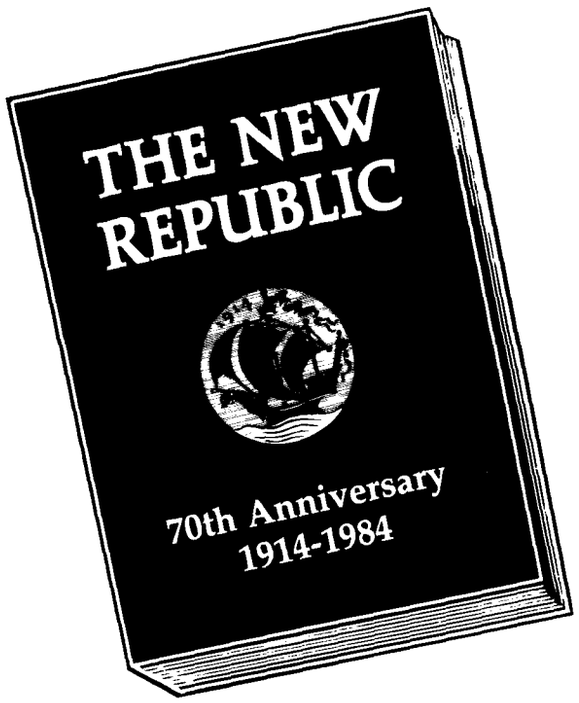
# "Don't give up the ship."

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become constitutional representative governments. On the contrary: the Glaoui in Morocco, the Hausa in northern Nigeria, the Bantu kingdoms in southern Africa, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—all of them having their origin in tribal confederacies and tribal warfare—became despotisms more or less ruthless, more or less arbitrary, haunted by insecurity and suspicion, and schooled in those arts to which rulers have to resort when they do not enjoy the boon of governing with the consent of the citizens and under the aegis of the laws.

Whatever the political tradition to which they belong, rulers of these "underdeveloped" countries are quite well aware of the gulf that yawns between them and their subjects. Such a state of affairs offers solid advantages to the rulers, who can sleep easy in the confidence that their subjects' fear of government is such that passivity is their only political stance. But development is not compatible with passivity. Development requires that passive subjects be mobilized into activity. Here, too, the example of Europe seems to provide the answer. Ideology and an ideological style of politics constitute a distinctive and powerful feature of the European political tradition. Mobilization of subjects, their integration into the enterprise of development—so rulers increasingly came to believe—would be affected by the indoctrination of subjects in some ideology or another, whether nationalism or socialism, or *ujamaa* (Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere's romantic concept of African socialism) or negritude. Thus passivity would be changed into activism, into enthusiasm for the commonweal. But such ideologies are, on the one hand, alien to the experience of the inhabitants of "underdeveloped" countries. And, on the other, they cannot produce initiative, inventiveness, or enterprise—cannot, in other words, energize these societies. To the burden of passive obedience which the subject owes to the ruler, they only add the obligation of active and demonstrative assent to official slogans and licensed doctrines.

The political inheritance of the underdeveloped countries is thus not propitious to development as this ideal is understood by them. Their economic situation is likewise not auspicious, and—what is perhaps even more serious—the planned and deliberate pursuit of development by a central authority is likely to set up powerful stresses in the body social and the body politic, and thus to put obstacles in the way of that prosperity and democracy which is declared to be the goal of development.

How nuclear proliferation is not being prevented.

# BUMBLING BOMB SQUAD

## BY TINA ROSENBERG

ON MAY 18, 1974, in a cavern under the Rajasthan desert in western India, the Indian government detonated an atomic bomb—and a regional arms race. "If India builds the bomb," Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the President of neighboring Pakistan, had warned in 1965, "we will eat grass or leaves, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own." In the late 1970s, using dummy European companies, Pakistan proceeded to buy parts for a plant to enrich uranium for use in bombs. Meanwhile, in Holland, Abdul Qadir Khan, a Pakistani physicist, was stealing blueprints for an enrichment plant from the engineering company he worked for. He was convicted for the theft in 1983 by a Dutch court and was sentenced in absentia to four years in prison. But by then Khan had returned to his native country to head its nuclear program. He announced last February that Pakistan could enrich uranium to bomb capacity in its new plant—whose design, not coincidentally, matches the blueprints he stole. On June 22, U.S. customs agents arrested three Pakistanis for trying to smuggle out fifty krytrons, the small, high-speed switches used in the intricate triggers of a nuclear weapon. The evidence is clear: Pakistan will soon have the atom bomb.

Although we devote most of our nuclear concern to the arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States, it is likely that the first nuclear war will not be between the superpowers, but between countries such as India and Pakistan, Iran and Iraq, or Israel and Libya—neighboring states with histories of passionate hostility. A regional nuclear war could break the thirty-nine-year taboo against using nuclear weapons and could escalate to draw in the superpowers. Even short of a war, imagine the terror a Khomeini or Qaddafi could cause if he had the bomb.

Standing between men like these and the bomb are the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations-sponsored agency with headquarters in Vienna. One would expect that these "safeguards" would include an international squad of crack inspectors alert to

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# THE SOVIET UNION'S NUCLEAR REALISM

THE SOVIET UNION'S record on nuclear proliferation is flawed but surprisingly commendable. Today Israel, South Africa, Pakistan, and India are capable of building nuclear weapons, in part because the U.S. and its allies have supplied them with the necessary fuel and technology. But no country (with the exception of China) has succeeded in building nuclear weapons because of help from the Soviet Union.

Moscow has traditionally shared the prevailing view in the West that the spread of nuclear weapons impairs regional and international stability. But while the United States has tolerated French and British nuclear weapon programs, Moscow has insisted on retaining a nuclear monopoly in its sphere of influence.

This is not to say that the Soviet Union has always been determined to halt the spread of the bomb. President Eisenhower's announcement in 1953 of the Atoms For Peace plan set off a nuclear exporting race between the superpowers. In 1955 the Soviets offered to supply all East European countries and China with research reactors and fuel. They also planned to supply close allies with large power-generating reactors. Moreover, the reactors they supplied to the People's Republic, and were planning to provide to Egypt and Czechoslovakia, would not be subject to nuclear safeguards, which meant there was no provision to ensure that the uranium would not be diverted for military purposes.

But the Soviets came to have second thoughts. In 1957, in a statement to the United Nations, the U.S.S.R. was the first country to urge the nuclear states to prevent the spread of atomic weaponry. Soviet concern deepened in May 1958, when China publicly announced its plans to develop nuclear weapons. Whether the Soviet Union had intended for China to build the bomb with the technology it provided is not clear. In any case, the Sino-Soviet estrangement was deepening, and the Soviet Union realized it had nothing to gain by granting new memberships in the nuclear club.

Within three months, Moscow retracted the offers it had made to its allies three years earlier. It canceled many of its nuclear export arrangements and instituted a remarkable non-proliferation measure to guarantee that nuclear fuel was not diverted from its clients' reactors. Thereafter it only supplied reactor fuel to its clients on the condition that they send back the spent fuel rods containing uranium, the potential bomb ingredient. To this day the Soviets accept the expense and responsibility of preventing their clients from following China's example.

The Soviets' 1957 statement, and a similiarly vague proposal from the United States and other Western nations that followed shortly thereafter, eventually led to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (N.P.T.) of 1968. (The eleven-year delay was caused mostly by a dispute over proliferation in Western Europe. The Soviets only agreed to the treaty after the United States agreed in 1967 not to transfer any nuclear weapons to West Germany's control.)

The Soviet Union made sure that its East European satellites signed the N.P.T. immediately, and pressured most of the Arab countries and many Soviet aid recipients to join, which they eventually did. These nations thus agreed not to obtain nuclear weapons and to accept International Atomic Energy Agency (I.A.E.A.) inspections if they employed any nuclear technology. The United States promoted the treaty just as forcefully, but was unable to persuade six key states in the West to sign it: Israel, South Africa, Pakistan, India, Argentina, and Brazil.

As a policy, the Soviet Union only exports nuclear equipment on the condition that the importing country sign the N.P.T. and therefore accept full-scope safeguards on its nuclear equipment. Iraq obediently signed the N.P.T. in 1968 in return for a small Soviet-supplied research reactor, which is still operating under safeguards. Even if all the safeguards were removed, Iraq would need at least five years to accumulate enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon. The Soviets, incidentally, had nothing to do with the Iraqi reactor that Israel bombed in 1981; it was built by our ally France.

Similiarly, in 1975 Libya's Muammar Qaddafi signed the N.P.T. in order to purchase his first power reactor from the U.S.S.R. But the Soviets have since delayed the project's completion until at least the 1990s. Libya also has a small Soviet-supplied research reactor which, like Iraq's, poses little proliferation threat.

The Soviets have somewhat compromised their non-proliferation policy for two geopolitically important countries: Argentina and India. In 1980 and 1982 the Soviet Union sold Argentina, which has not signed the N.P.T., safeguarded uranium for its research reactors and the "heavy water" that sustains nuclear fission in a reactor. In a more serious lapse, the U.S.S.R. sold heavy water to India in 1973; the next year, New Delhi detonated a 15-kiloton nuclear explosion. Although the heavy water was not used to manufacture the Indian device, the Soviet Union failed to punish India for its nuclear test. In fact, the Soviets supplied India with more heavy water in 1976. And since then they haven't pressured India to accept safeguards on all of its reactors, nor to curtail its present efforts to develop ballistic missiles.

The Soviet's latest non-proliferation gesture is largely symbolic, but it could be a hopeful sign for the arms race in general. Moscow has announced that it is planning for the first time to open certain nuclear facilities to I.A.E.A. inspections. I.A.E.A. safeguards don't matter much in the nuclear weapon states, which can produce fissile material openly anyway. The more important implications may be for superpower arms control. The United States has long wanted on-site monitoring of arms control agreements; the Soviet Union has always rejected it. If the Soviets' willingness to accept on-site verification of their nuclear reactors reflects a willingness to accept it on their nuclear defenses, one obstacle to future arms control treaties will be removed.

**SUSAN SUBAK**

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the slightest sign of someone diverting nuclear material from peaceful use. But far from being a SWAT team combating proliferation, the I.A.E.A.'s inspectors, its camera monitors, and its various kinds of seals are little more than an auditing system. The I.A.E.A. is simply a public address system that lets the world know when a country is about to cross the nuclear threshold.

The example of Pakistan is instructive. About five years ago I.A.E.A. inspectors began to wonder if Pakistan was using its nuclear reactor near Karachi to produce extra fuel for a weapons program. Cameras monitoring the reactor were mysteriously failing. Canvas sheets were placed in front of other cameras, backup cameras showed evidence of tampering, and monitors at the reactor's exits showed that someone was carrying radioactive substances out. In October 1981 the director of the I.A.E.A. informed its board of directors that the agency could no longer guarantee that Pakistan was not diverting fuel for bombs.

Many people considered this warning an admission of failure; the I.A.E.A. considers it a measure of success. "We have rung the alarm," I.A.E.A. director Hans Blix told Judith Miller of *The New York Times* in 1982. "That is the end of our role. The governments must now decide what to do about Pakistan. Safeguards, after all, are not an end in themselves."

To a certain extent, the safeguards *have* discouraged proliferation. They do deter weapons production—a country is less likely to march hell-bent toward accumulating a nuclear arsenal if it knows someone is watching. No nation has joined the nuclear club since China in 1964 (India pretends that the bomb it detonated in 1974 was a "peaceful nuclear explosion"): the official list still contains only the U.S., Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China.

But that is only the official list. Safeguards are inadequate where they are most crucial: in the few countries determined to build bombs. A recent C.I.A. report estimates that Argentina could build a bomb within a year. Israel has never acknowledged what intelligence officials in other countries assume—that it possesses readily assembled bomb components. South Africa may have tested a nuclear weapon in 1980 in the South Atlantic; an American satellite picked up the characteristic double flash of a nuclear test, but no one knows whose. (Sam Cohen, inventor of the neutron bomb, argued in "La Bombe" [TNR, January 17, 1981] that France was responsible.) In 1980, an I.A.E.A. inspector wrote to the State Department, saying that Iraq's Osirak reactor could allow Iraq to develop weapons before 1985; the analysis was disputed, but the Israelis took no chances—in 1981 they bombed the reactor.

THE LIMITS OF safeguards stem from the origin of the I.A.E.A. An outgrowth of President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace program, the agency was set up in 1957 with the schizophrenic mission of promoting the peaceful use of atomic energy while guarding against the building of weapons by placing safeguards on the uranium and plutonium that could be made into bombs.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 placed safeguards on all the nuclear facilities of every signatory country that didn't already have nuclear weapons. Countries that don't adhere to the treaty—including "risk" nations such as Argentina, Brazil, India, Israel, Pakistan, and South Africa—must still carry safeguards on all plants processing imported fuel, but when they process fuel they make themselves, no safeguards are required. If Pakistan, for example, has learned to enrich its own uranium to bomb grade, it has reached the point of no return: it can make nuclear weapons out of sight of safeguards.

The safeguards agreement quickly became a pact between corporations, member nations, and the I.A.E.A. to legitimate nuclear commerce. Many developing countries saw safeguards as a ruse to codify the split between nuclear and non-nuclear nations, making them permanent second-class citizens. They pushed for timid safeguards, and nations with burgeoning nuclear industries agreed. The philosophy thrives today. Only a quarter of the I.A.E.A.'s money (raised from member nations, principally the United States) goes to safeguards—this year $32.5 million—the other $107 million goes to administration and promotional activities. "I would rather view all the agency's activities, including safeguards, as promotional," Blix said at a conference in Canada in 1983.

The result of so little pressure for strict enforcement is a toothless system that allows a country to create every component of a bomb, including fuel—highly enriched uranium or reprocessed plutonium—as long as it is part of a "peaceful" nuclear program. Or, because a country can withdraw from the I.A.E.A. with three months' notice, it can use the safeguards as a stamp of legitimacy to acquire all the technology, hardware, and fuel it needs—and then withdraw. After pulling out, the country can construct an atomic bomb without violating a single word of its safeguards agreement.

ALTHOUGH SAFEGUARDS on all of a nation's nuclear facilities improve the likelihood that a diversion will be discovered, the inspection process is riddled with holes. First, there aren't enough inspectors to do a good job. The I.A.E.A. has only 250 inspectors to keep track of 600 or so nuclear installations under safeguards. A 1981 study by Pacific Northwest Laboratory concluded that in 1979 I.A.E.A. personnel devoted a total of about 3,300 working days to inspection—about one-tenth of what the laboratory said was needed.

Second, thorough inspections require the cooperation of the country under safeguards, which makes the system somewhat like a jail where the prisoners supervise the guards. Countries can and do veto inspectors; Iraq, for example, allowed only Soviet and Hungarian inspectors until 1981, when it allowed French inspectors into its French-built reactor. Countries can also examine inspection reports. Former I.A.E.A. inspector Emanuel Morgan said he had to obtain prior approval of his report from an official of the country it concerned. "You learn to use your common sense," says Calvin Delegard, another former inspector. "You can't blow



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the whistle just because your camera failed."

Third, the auditing process isn't tight enough to detect a diversion carried out bit by bit. Inspectors examine a plant's record books and weigh or count its nuclear materials. Even so, there is an inevitable margin of error in the measurements, which leaves material unaccounted for—and could hide a diversion. The problem is most serious with reprocessing plants, where globs of plutonium have to be weighed, making small errors likely. (It is less serious with light water reactors, which only require counting separate fuel rods—much easier to get exactly right.) Reprocessing and enrichment plants are harder to safeguard for another reason. In light water power reactors, which produce highly diluted spent fuel, a few grams missing a year isn't cause for concern. But at a uranium enrichment or plutonium reprocessing plant, the material is so concentrated that even small amounts can be enough to make a bomb. From 1955 to 1980, for example, nearly 150 kilos of plutonium—enough for nineteen small bombs—disappeared from a South Carolina military reprocessing plant.

Finally, a country can build a nuclear arsenal without ever violating the safeguards agreement. Inspectors do not just drop in on an operator; the host country schedules their visits at its convenience. Iraq allowed visits to its Osirak reactor only three times a year. Once they arrive, inspectors have no authority to fish around for clandestine operations or undeclared material, a crippling limitation because even a country that has signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty can exempt facilities from inspection. Iraq, which signed the treaty, kept inspectors out of its plutonium laboratories by claiming the facilities hadn't used materials that were subject to inspection.

Cameras and seals supplement the inspectors. Paired film cameras in a power reactor each snap a picture every fifteen or twenty minutes, ensuring only eight to ten minutes between pictures, but sometimes the image is too blurred to be meaningful. People or construction can block the camera, and lights can fail or cameras themselves can stop working, as they did in Pakistan's Karachi reactor. Many seals are paper and easily forged; others can be removed and reassembled or bypassed without detection.

WHAT HAPPENS if despite all the obstacles to detection, an inspector finds and reports evidence of a weapons program?

To be effective, the I.A.E.A. should be able to detect a diversion in "critical time": enough time to stop a country from building a bomb, a figure which varies for material in different stages. According to a group of technical experts commissioned by the I.A.E.A., after a diversion of plutonium in metal form or highly enriched uranium, a bomb can be built within seven to ten days.

Unless inspectors visit these facilties every ten days, then, they can't guarantee to detect a diversion in time to stop it. But the results would not be much different even if it took years to assemble a bomb. The I.A.E.A. is so wary of calling a false alarm that it has crippled its ability to catch a real diversion. It took eighteen months, for instance, to get I.A.E.A. permission for a special inspection of Pakistan's Karachi reactor after inspectors noticed suspicious behavior in 1979. During that time, of course, Pakistan had plenty of time to hide the evidence.

An inspector who finds suspicious behavior first tells the I.A.E.A. what he has found. This sets off a long process in which higher and higher levels of the I.A.E.A. discuss the problem, and the country has several opportunities to explain it. If the board of governors is still not satisfied, it takes the complaint to the U.N. Security Council. It is revealing that this has never happened. If it did, however, the Council could only reprimand the diverter—the international equivalent of withholding dessert.

Obviously, if a country wants to build weapons, current safeguards are more of an annoyance than a barrier. Yet our non-proliferation policy is based on the idea that countries that accept safeguards, especially full-scope safeguards, are desirable nuclear customers. The Reagan Administration supports a "reliable supplier" strategy: the theory that countries that are going to buy may as well buy from the United States because we insist on strict safeguards. As a result, it has approved sales or technology transfers to India, Argentina, and South Africa. It reversed the Ford and Carter policies of actively discouraging plutonium reprocessing in some supplier countries; it has also waived our right to control resale of plutonium in U.S.-supplied plants. A misguided faith in safeguards provides the Administration with an excuse to sell to the most unsavory customers and promote exactly the kind of technology that safeguards can't handle.

ONLY A DRASTIC upgrading of safeguards could make this risky policy safer. Some improvements are relatively easy—developing better cameras and seals, hiring more inspectors and giving them better training and equipment. The I.A.E.A. is now taking these steps. But the more important political improvements are not as easy. Inspectors need freedom to see any facility, not just those the country wants to show, and to drop in unannounced. They need to be able to write honest evaluations without fear they will lose their jobs.

But it's safe to expect that nuclear war will arrive long before an international agency places its job above politics. Rather than rely on a miraculous transformation of I.A.E.A. to control proliferation, we need to reduce nuclear commerce—to discourage suppliers of easy virtue, notably France and West Germany, from selling, and to discourage suspect countries from buying. The first step is to set a better example with our own nuclear policy. We can also offer "risk" countries discounts on low-enriched uranium, which is suitable for power reactors but not weapons, as an incentive to forgo more dangerous programs. We can use diplomacy to persuade suppliers and buyers that restraint is in their own best interests. Safeguards are the only game in town, and the world would be more dangerous without them. But they should supplement, not replace, a realistic strategy for containing the bomb. □



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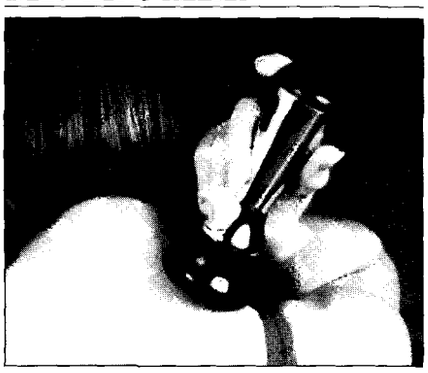

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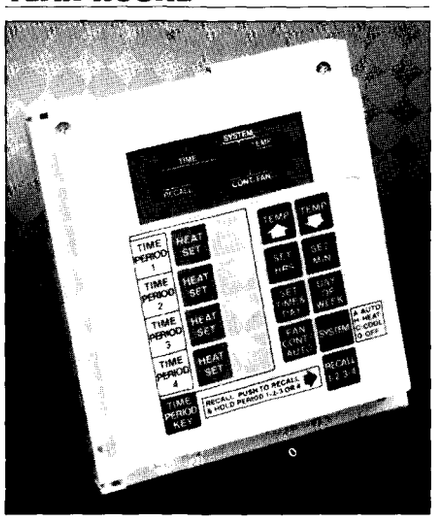


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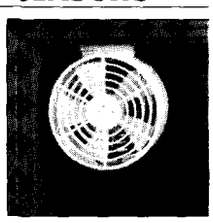

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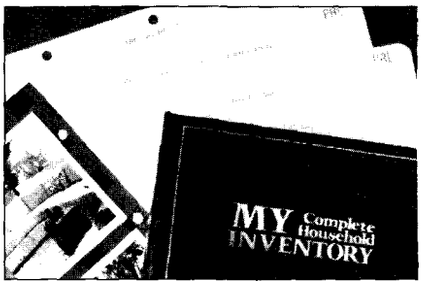


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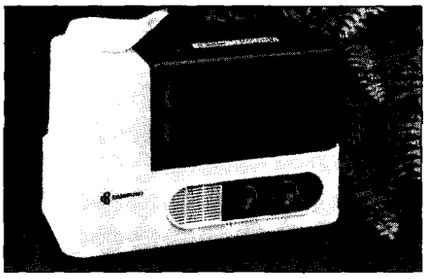

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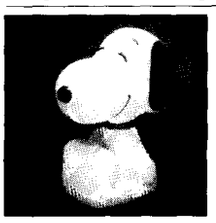

What could be friendlier nighttime company than one of these whimsical creations from Heller? Gladys Goose, 26″ high, surveys the scene with imperial hauteur, allowing no unpleasantness to draw near; Lite-up Snoopy*, 18″ high, camps in comfort, exuding cartoon beatitude. Each light made of blow-molded plastic, cunningly colored, UL-listed for use with 25w bulb. Gladys Goose costs **$29.00** ($5.95) #A1221, Snoopy **$29.00** ($5.95) #A1222.

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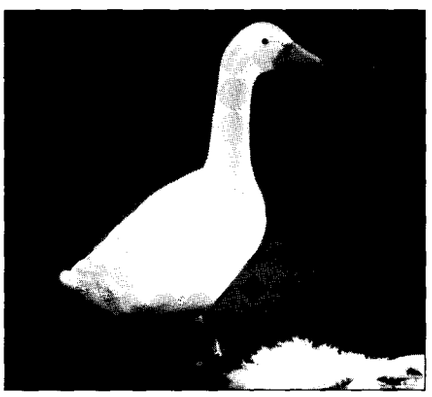

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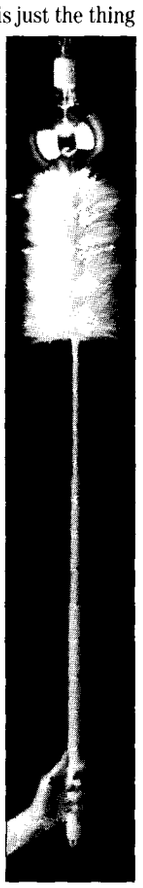

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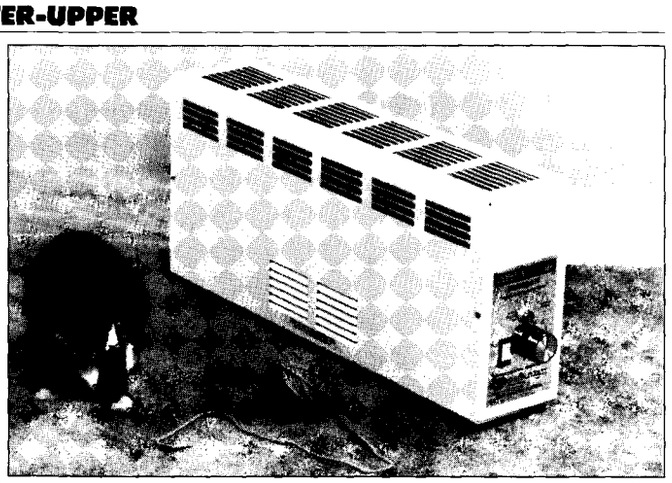

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# STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

## One From Group Two

Right from the start of his directing career, Bertrand Tavernier has had a singular relation with old men. His first feature, *The Clockmaker*, made in 1973 when Tavernier was 32, had a screenplay by Jean Aurenche and Pierre Bost, both then in their 70s. Bost died in 1975. Tavernier's next two screenplays, *Let Joy Reign Supreme* and *The Judge and the Assassins*, were collaborations by himself and Aurenche. Later came *A Week's Vacation*, which had a pivotal scene where the heroine visited her invalid father, played by Jeane Dasté, an actor fixed in the firmament by Jean Vigo in *Zero for Conduct* and *L'Atalante* back in the early 1930s. Aurenche was again Tavernier's collaborator on *Coup de Torchon*, and now Tavernier salutes the memory of Pierre Bost by filming a Bost novel called here *A Sunday in the Country*. (Tavernier and his wife adapted the book.) The main figure, a painter, is played by Louis Ducreux, well known in the French theater as actor-playwright-director, who has worked very little in films and now plays his first major film role at 73.

*A Sunday in the Country*
(MGM/UA Classics)

This exceptional partiality for older collaborators quite possibly derives from Tavernier's interest in history (*Let Joy Reign Supreme* and *The Judge and the Assassin* are masterly re-creations of the French past) and especially in film history (he has written much on the subject). His partiality is capped in this latest film because its very subject is age. The Sunday is spent with the painter, early in this century and late in his own life, who looks back at his own history with acceptance, then feels some impulse to question that acceptance.

But the sad report is that *A Sunday in the Country* falls into Group Two of Tavernier's works. Group One includes the excellent films named above (except *Coup de Torchon*), which show Tavernier's understanding of oppressions in the world and in the self, of communion with other human beings as the only verities amidst the swirls of falsehood and fear. The films in Group Two, *Spoiled Children*, *Coup de Torchon*, and this new work, seem to start, not with impulse but with attitudes. In *Sunday*, for instance, it's as if Tavernier had begun with an image of himself as the maker of *Sunday*, rather than with a close concern about the material—as if he had begun with a vision of the film finished and himself hailed as the creator of a gentle film about a gentle old man.

This sense of what Tavernier wanted to be said about the film, rather than of what he had to say in it, strikes us from the start and continues throughout. *Sunday* is loaded with conventional enticements of lyric film. It begins with a woman's voice speaking out of the dark, as in *Jules and Jim*. Then we get *belle époque* decor and costumes, used with abject dependence on their accepted "meaning"—the innocence of the days before the First World War. The cinematography, by Bruno de Keyzer, clings closely to the memory mode, the suggestion of sepia to evoke the feeling of old photographs. The screenplay has reminders of *Wild Strawberries:* scenes with the old man's long-dead wife are spliced in, not as flashbacks but as presences in his mind. And two dream children, little girls whom no one sees except the old man, play about his garden in their summery frocks as if shipped over from the nearest Symbol Shop.

The script takes a shape—a life in a day—that has nothing wrong with it if something right is done with it. This Sunday, out of endless Sundays, is meant to be a moment of anagnorisis for the old man. On Sundays his son and daughter-in-law and their three children come down by train from Paris for lunch; this day they are joined by Ducreux's daughter, an attractive young Parisienne (she seems more like his granddaughter) who motors down, bustles around the place, has imperiously affectionate moments with her father and her niece and nephews, upsets the comfy routine of the day with her freshness, gets a telephone call from her lover, and drives hurriedly back to town. She has had time, however, to have a meal and several snacks—I lost count of how often this group took various refreshments during the day—to give her father some gently piercing comments about his career, and to serve the film both as contrast to his aesthetic complacency and her brother's philistine complacency.

Every characterization, every contrast is familiar. More, Tavernier's use of them has a patness, a consciousness of design, that further militates against effect. And the distance between us and the patterns is frozen by the character of the painter. Not much self-discovery or shedding of illusions is possible here because the old man has few illusions about himself. He doesn't think he is more than he apparently is, a minor painter who has had moderate success. (Apparently he has always had some

### FILMS WORTH SEEING

*Amadeus*. Historically, it's hooey. But this fiction about Mozart and Salieri has much of Mozart's music, magnificence for the eye, and a good performance by F. Murray Abraham as Salieri. (Reviewed 10/22/84)

*Bizet's Carmen*. Pow. Francesco Rosi directed this film of the opera with fire and fluency and with a Carmen, Julia Migenes-Johnson, who makes the screen sweat. (10/1/84)

*Falling in Love*. The stalest of stories, extramarital love in the suburbs, but with moving and delightful performances from Meryl Streep and Robert De Niro. Ulu Grosbard directs romantically. (12/10/84)

*Stranger than Paradise*. A first film by Jim Jarmusch, an American, yet not a predictable first American film. Three young people float "existentially" with witty nonchalance. (10/29/84)

**SK**



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money.) He exhibits neither false grandeur nor keen bitterness: he just lives quietly and well, and paints conservatory pictures of flowers and landscapes and rooms. When he is left alone at the end of the day, facing a blank canvas, tears well in his eyes—but not in ours. No painful vision of the futility of life and the waste of possibility has come to this man. His tears are themselves conventional, age's regret about time irretrievably gone. The penetration of character, the revelations of this detailed day, are as superficial as the making of the film itself.

This thinness is underscored by Ducreux's performance. The publicity told us of a long, active life in the French theater and prepared us for an actor of importance belatedly revealed to the world, perhaps a Victor Francen or Sacha Guitry or Louis Jouvet who had been foolishly ignored by film. But Ducreux proves, in a sense, too mimetically apt for his role: he plays the competent minor painter like a competent minor actor. He has no great depth or force of personality; he seems nothing more than a quite acceptable stock company Old Man.

The other adult performances—the faithful old servant who worries about her master, the pompous son, his proper wife, the headstrong daughter—are complete after the first thirty seconds with each: we can fill in the rest ourselves but are not allowed to. Tavernier puts them all into place like puppets he has taken from a box and keeps manipulating.

*A Sunday in the Country* is worrisome because Tavernier is worth worrying about. He is one of the very few directors to emerge since 1970 anywhere in the world—at least as we are enabled to see what's happening in the film world—who have a claim on the first rank. The best comfort in his new film is that he has made clinkers before and has followed them with good work. He is in love with film and runs the risks of that love, of making a film like this one that does nothing but display his love. His better work shows him *using* that love, not coldly but austerely.

More from Group One, please.

# ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

## Exploding an Anarchist Play

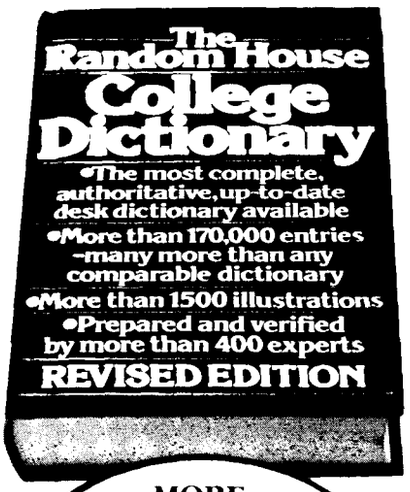
Dario Fo is a high-spirited Italian dramatist in an Aristophanic tradition who writes plays as if Karl Marx and Groucho Marx were contending for his soul. The result of this unlikely struggle is a species of left-wing political farce, a rare theatrical form regularly practiced in this country only by the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Fo has two reigning

*Accidental Death of an Anarchist*
by Dario Fo

passions, not always well integrated in his work—a passion for justice and a passion for the absurd. In *We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay!*, for example, a play about a consumer's strike in a proletarian district of Milan, he alternates hilarious adultery comedy with such long-winded anticapitalist tirades that even those who share his political position wish he'd get off the stump and back to his raunchy high jinks.

With *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (Belasco), however, he has found a most congenial parable, where politics is the root of the comedy rather than a didactic graft or transplant. The absurdity in this play is human organization itself. Fo's targets are the corrupt practices of government bureaucracies and state-sponsored agencies, and he has a delicious time ridiculing the evasions and lies of civic functionaries. As a result, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* is more radical than even Fo may have intended, for the satire embraces all inhibiting systems, including those of the Eastern bloc. Despite his Communist rhetoric, Fo is, like most comic artists, an anarchist, his enemy being any structure that would restrict the exuberant physical life of humanity.

The parable is simple. Following a series of bombings in Milan, a train worker with anarchist sympathies falls to his death from a fourth-floor window after being interrogated by police. The police explanation, obviously a cover-up for official murder, is that the victim committed suicide in a state of "raptus."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Enter a character who calls himself Antonio A. Antonio. Described in the program as "the Fool," Antonio is clearly the "wise fool" of Erasmus, the *eiron* of Socrates—shrewder than any philosopher, an escaped lunatic who proceeds, through his crazy divertissements and myriad disguises, to prove that it's the system, not he, which is mad. This he does by unmasking the fascist sympathies of the police ("We meet on Thursdays"), ridiculing their alibis ("Everyone who believes in 'raptus,' clap hands"), leading them through union songs and the Internationale.

A "histriomaniac" with the capacity to vary his shapes at will, the Fool transforms into a judge appointed to investigate the details of the "suicide," a Strangelovian research scientist equipped with a fake hand and a glass eye, a sanctimonious bishop absolving all the culprits of the crime. By appearing sympathetic to the police officials, he encourages them to confess their lies and contradictions, thus exposing the cover-up to a female reporter seeking background on the case. Claiming immunity under an ordinance that protects madmen and whales, the Fool pulls out a bomb which he threatens to explode unless everyone recites in unison "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." He is thereupon thrown from the window as the police repeat the litany, "I guess he must have jumped." The cycle having completed itself, the Fool reappears, now renamed Roberto E. Roberto, to investigate another "accidental death."

This thin plot is really a pretext for an extraordinary series of riffs and ripostes, as the Fool lampoons, satirizes, and generally unbalances his ludicrously outclassed antagonists. A clone of Groucho, his mockery is a compound of nerve, wit, gall, and energy, as he mangles syntax and logic, confirming the surreal relationship between words and objects. It was Antonin Artaud who first noticed affinities between anarchism and farce—in an essay written, as a matter of fact, on the Marx Brothers. Identifying what he called "the dangerous aspect of all these funny jokes," calling the conclusion of *Monkey Business* "a hymn to anarchy and wholehearted revolt," Artaud saw the liberating nature of laughter and the revolutionary impulses of anarchism to be one and the same. In *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, Fo acknowledges similar links as he conducts a revolt of the body against the state, assaulting all restraints—moral, social, or political—on the irrepressible nature of free men.

The current production, which comes to us, almost entirely recast, from the Arena Stage in Washington, features a new adaptation by the American playwright Richard Nelson. It is a gallant effort to find appropriate equivalents for Fo's satiric targets in American culture, and I think it generally succeeds. In order to simulate the smug pieties of the Italian bureaucrats, Nelson must inevitably turn to Reagan campaign rhetoric, a risky business which the audience, nevertheless, seemed to adore. Borrowing from an already classic strip by Toles, the inspired political cartoonist for the Buffalo *News*, Nelson has the Fool collapsing into a heap as he intones, "Let us never forget as we drive down that long, long highway a hundred years from now." ("Do we still have time?") There are references to the Great Communicator's belief that trees pollute the air and to his habit of sleeping in cabinet meetings, as well as to the jingoist "U.S.A." atmosphere generated by the Olympics and to the general impatience inspired these days by any reference to poverty. ("Aren't you getting a little sick and tired of hearing about poor people?" the Fool asks the audience. "I never see them, and I go to a lot of parties.") Not all of these jokes take wing, but it is somewhat refreshing on Broadway to hear political subjects mentioned at all.

AS FOR the production, it has an appropriate design by Karl Eigsti, featuring an act curtain composed of headlines from *Il Giorno* and painted comic strip flats festooned with naked dressing-room bulbs. It also has a relatively strong supporting cast: Gerry Bamman as a barking dog Police Inspector, Raymond Serra as a bull dog Police Chief, Joe Grifasi as a hang dog Police Captain. There are exceptions to the general competence: Bill Irwin, a gifted mime who, as an actor, seems completely out of his element playing a baffled Sergeant (too bland, too ingratiating, Buster Keaton as a pussy cat), and Patti LuPone, who is miscast as the Reporter. The misconception of the Reporter's role suggests one of the reasons why this production, for all its frantic activity, eventually dissipates Fo's energies and turns the evening into a tiresome charade. The key parts feature actors working at characters, rather than comics doing vaudeville schtik.

The Reporter is based on a long-departed, entirely sexist, absolutely lovely burlesque convention: the well-stacked broad whose ample anatomy serves as the focus of the top banana's attention. Miss LuPone plays this part with great seriousness, as if she were doing a job of investigative reporting for *The Washington Post*, thereby losing most of Fo's lubricious humor.

It tends to get lost as well in the performance of Jonathan Pryce as the Fool, not because this good actor misconceives the role but rather because he is not really appropriate for it. The character of the Fool—a compound of such commedia archetypes as Arlecchino and the vulgar comics of the American vaudeville-burlesque tradition—simply shouts for a great clown. Pryce, though he obviously understands these traditions, gives an often brilliant clown impersonation, but we always see him working. Tense and wired, skinny and bug-eyed, Pryce scampers about the stage in an impressive display of virtuosity; yet his acting seems self-conscious rather than instinctual, willed, not natural, manic instead of comic. A successful performance never shows the effort necessary to achieve it, but rather effort overcome. Pryce is clearly laboring, and it is the high visibility of that labor that accounts, I believe, for the fatigue of the production, not to mention the general sympathy note, otherwise inexplicable, for his performance.

Even more inexplicable is why an Englishman was imported for this role when there are so many inspired American clowns (even considering the loss of Bobby Clark and Zero Mostel) around to play it: Mel Brooks, Steve Martin, Dick Shawn, Sid Caesar, Joe Piscopo, Richard Pryor, Carl Reiner, you name him. I don't mean this to sound like another bit of "U.S.A." chauvinism. A great British comic—Bennie Hill, say, or Monty Python's John Cleese and Michael Palin—could have realized this character, too. But it is a sign of our national cultural inferiority complex about English theater that we cast abroad for an R.S.C. actor to imitate what Americans do by nature. Still another sign is the way this wild and dangerous Italian comedy is being dismissed as "tame" while the British star unwittingly responsible for taming it is receiving almost universal praise.



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Communism's crusade against jazz and rock in Czechoslovakia.

# HIPNESS AT NOON

BY JOSEF ŠKVORECKÝ

THE name of the organization was innocuous: the Jazz Section of the Czech Musicians' Union. Its membership was restricted to 3,000—a mere club of aficionados of a type of music that ceased to excite the masses long ago, and was therefore taken off the Communist Party's list of dangerous social phenomena. When, after thirteen years of existence, the Jazz Section was finally, for all practical purposes, forced out of existence, the event went unnoticed in the West. *Time* did publish a story, but ran it only in its European edition. In America this act of "minor" repression apparently was not considered newsworthy. And the bloodless demise of a small group of jazz lovers does pale in the reddish light of a world where even genocide is of declining newsworthiness. Still, for the student of "really existing socialism," as the system in Czechoslovakia now defines itself, the brief history of the Czechs who liked syncopation more than their government provides an ideal insight into the workings of "people's democracies."

After sixty years of the Soviet state's struggle against art, it should be obvious that Marxists in power do not trouble themselves about aesthetics. They ask only their variation of the query from the Jewish joke: "Is it good for the Jews, or bad for the Jews?" Apparently jazz, that generous gift of America to the world, has never been good for Communists in power; although before they clamped down on it, jazz did help them to recruit quite a few young men and women. But once the Communist cause turned from liberating people to closely watching them, the jungle sounds of freedom became suspect. At times they were deemed superbly dangerous, at other times only alien to the new socialist man. The criterion was simple. If music fills a football stadium with raving youngsters, it signals danger. If it fills only a smokey jazz club with nostalgic middle-aged men, it is just a nuisance. A well-entrenched Leninist state can tolerate nuisances; thus jazz in Czechoslovakia was under fire only until Elvis Presley and hip gyrations reached first the proletarian dance halls, then the upper-New Class ballrooms. At that point the ideological gunmen switched their sights from the saxophone to the electric guitar.

But in 1982, after 20 years of comparative peace for jazz, something happened. In the course of the next two years the party media orchestrated a clamorous witch hunt directed overtly against punk rock, but covertly against the Jazz Section. For two years the public was treated to dozens upon dozens of articles and letters-to-the-editor written in classical Stalinese, all depicting the pop-and-jazz scene in Czechoslovakia as a hotbed of antisocialist conspiracies. The campaign closely followed the model of the 1950s: the victim, still at large and even holding some kind of office, was tenderized for the knock on the door, for the public confession, for the gallows.

Why suddenly so much ado about a musical nuisance?

I SUPPOSE one has to go back to Lenin. This evil genius of a cause that once seemed so good to so many realized one thing: well-entrenched establishments are rarely overthrown by spontaneous, undirected mass movements. If a group of intelligent organizers channels the pent-up strength of popular feelings in the right direction, however, thrones will fall. It follows that once the well-directed power of the masses has achieved the aims of its leaders, the leaders must see to it that no more spontaneous movements emerge; or, if they do, that they be made nonspontaneous by guides appointed "from above." In the dictionary of victorious Marxism, spontaneity (*živelnost* in Czech) has become anathema. It is a crime against really existing socialism.

Yet one cannot prevent spontaneous interest in various uncalled-for things, such as jazz, especially among the young; and it is hard, moreover, to make them nonspontaneous. Such interest always arises "from below," another term of opprobrium for something that is simply natural. A group of youngsters becomes excited by Elvis Presley, gets hold of a few guitars, tries them out in an abandoned barn. Other youngsters will come to the barn to listen. Eventually a new amateur band plays for free in the local pub, crowded with rock 'n' rolling teenagers. A spontaneous movement, in short, has emerged. In America the band might make a few records, disappear into obscurity or be catapulted into stardom. In the socialist states, in the good old days of Uncle Joe, the police raided such pubs and arrested such players.

But that kind of directness creates martyrs, and raises interest in the forbidden fruit. Therefore it is used today only against the most hardened and incorrigible thought-criminals. Remembering Lenin, the party has established organizations such as the Socialist Union of Youth to channel spontaneous movements into riverbeds controllable "from above" by means of "interest groups" (*zájmové kroužky*). It is hoped that, under the guidance of overseers installed by the party, jazz-and-rock-loving youth will listen to the trimmed sounds of records carefully preselected by an ideological committee, and play low volume rock that will sound sweet even to the ears of the *papaláš* (Czech slang for Communist big shots).

It is hoped, but it never happens. Real interest cannot be controlled by fake interest. All that the Youth Union accomplishes is that the amateur band moves from the abandoned barn into the state-provided club room; and instead of making them work for the money needed for equipment, the man "from above" buys the synthesizer with the money from the Culture Fund. There is a tremendous scarcity of dependable men "from above"; the "really existing" ones are moved by hard

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syncopation much more than by the "Holy Script" of Marxism-Leninism.

As long as it is only a local phenomenon, the deviations of an interest group can be handled. When worst comes to worst in Hicksville, the Hicksville cops will move in. They will beat up a few lads, crush a few guitars, and there is peace in Hicksville for another couple of months. But if a central group in Prague appears "from below," a sort of Central Committee of fans, and they start building up a network of Hicksville rock groups all over the country, we are in serious trouble!

The Jazz Section developed into such a central committee. It was headed by volunteers who received no pay—another anathema in really existing socialism. The 3,000 members permitted by the party supported the leaders with enthusiasm, and they were remarkably disciplined. A spontaneous movement came into existence, directed by leaders who were not appointed from above, and were therefore "spontaneous" themselves!

It got out of hand.

IT started in 1971, three years after the Soviet ambush. After that exercise in historical dialectics, all artists' unions were disbanded and new ones, presided over by carefully chosen, party-nominated "chairmen," were cautiously established, among them the Czech Musicians' Union. A group of jazz enthusiasts applied to the Ministry of the Interior for permission to form a separate Union of Czech Jazz Musicians. The Ministry turned them down and recommended that individual jazzmen join the Musicians' Union. The functionaries of that organization interpreted the Ministry's decision not as a recommendation that jazzmen merge with the others into a faceless musical group, easily controlled from above by a few reliables, but rather as permission to form, within the Union, a special interest section. The statutes already permitted it, and the Union already had, for instance, a Music Critics' Section.

In this way the Jazz Section established itself and elected a chairman. The Ministry of the Interior, which neglected to pre-select someone for that position, restricted itself to setting the *numerous clausus* of 3,000 for the membership—a figure that, in a nation of 11 million, was certainly quite insignificant. Thus at the outset an interesting legal situation was created: the Ministry of the Interior did not approve an independent organization, and since the Jazz Section did not originate with the Ministry, the cops had no legal power to disband it. That was the unpleasant prerogative of the Musicians' Union. Later this circumstance played a part in prolonging the Section's life.

The fact that an organization not permitted de jure emerged de facto, and that although formally dependent on the Musicians' Union, it acted with remarkable independence, was made possible by the existence of what I like to call the Gray Zone. By that I mean the "gigantic conspiracy to outwit the abysses of darkness" of which Kenneth Tynan spoke in the 1950s. Of course he did not have in mind the darkness that calls itself really existing socialism. There the Gray Zone is merely the conspiracy of normal people who stand between the fanaticism of the orthodox and the cynicism of the pragmatic on the one side, and the abnormal moral courage of the dissidents on the other. The overt solidarity of these men and women is with Caesar, but their covert sympathies belong to God. They hang portraits of the Big Brothers over their desks, but right under their eyes they read Orwell and listen to Charlie Parker. They have no organization, unless human decency is an organizing principle. All ministries, all offices, all schools, all factories are infiltrated by them, and the Musicians' Union was no exception. They are the Gray Zone which makes really existing socialism livable—in fact, which makes it work.

AT FIRST the Section limited itself to the sort of activities permitted to such groups. It issued a not-for-sale, members-only bulletin called *Jazz*. It sent lecturers to Cultural Clubs, held jam sessions and disc jockey shows. It sponsored the yearly jazz festivals entitled Prague Jazz Days, which were distinguished at first by strict jazz orthodoxy and therefore did not attract multitudes. The authorities watched, occasionally they grumbled, but they did not much interfere. Their eyes were on rock 'n' roll.

Slowly, then quickly, all this changed in the mid-'70s, when jazzrock appeared on the scene, when a half-forgotten positive phenomenon of the '50s was rediscovered and soon achieved unprecedented proportions. The Gray Zone conspiracy always finds loopholes in the armor of orthodoxy, and in the '50s it detected a gap in censorship. Officially sanctioned organizations were allowed to print newsletters, and sometimes little booklets, for their membership. Such materials could not be sold to the public; but the censors applied much lighter criteria of orthodoxy to them, and sometimes did not even require that they be submitted for inspection. This may appear as an incredible leniency, or perhaps as an oversight. It was neither. In the early '50s the party simply relied on terror. The idea that the Association of the Keepers of Aquarium Fish, say, would print a volume of surrealist poetry seemed—well, surrealist. And yet one of the very best, surrealistically inclined modern Czech fiction writers, Bohumil Hrabal (*Closely Watched Trains*), made his literary debut in precisely this way. For years he had been known to everybody interested or working in literature, but since he was labeled a decadent non-Marxist naturalist no publisher would touch him. Then in 1956 a prominent poet and artist, Jiří Kolář, convinced the Gray Zonists of the Bibliophiles' Club that one issue of their members' newsletter should contain, as a supplement, a little book of Hrabal's stories, *People Talking* (*Hovory lidí*). The booklet came out, for members only. Encouraged by this event, the Writers' Union Publishing House attempted to bring out Hrabal's collection, *Lark On A String* (*Skřivánek na niti*) for the general public in 1959. The censors immediately killed the book and sent it to the shredder.

In the '50s *People Talking* was an isolated phenomenon. In the mid-'70s, however, the loophole was suddenly stretched wide by the Jazz Section and its audacious chairman, Karel Srp. To the bulletin *Jazz*, the Section added two more for-members-only publications: a paperback series, *Jazzpetit*, and a line of art monographs, *Situace* (*Situations*). Both became the haven of authors, artists, and theorists of art interested in genres and trends that were, for all practical purposes, outlawed. Surprisingly, the old exemption of membership publications from the duty to submit them to the censorship office held—perhaps because the Gray Zone has a branch even in the Cop Ministry.

The *Situace* series focused exclusively on what that old really existing socialist Dr. Goebbels would call *entartete Kunst*: the stuff made from old wire and feath-



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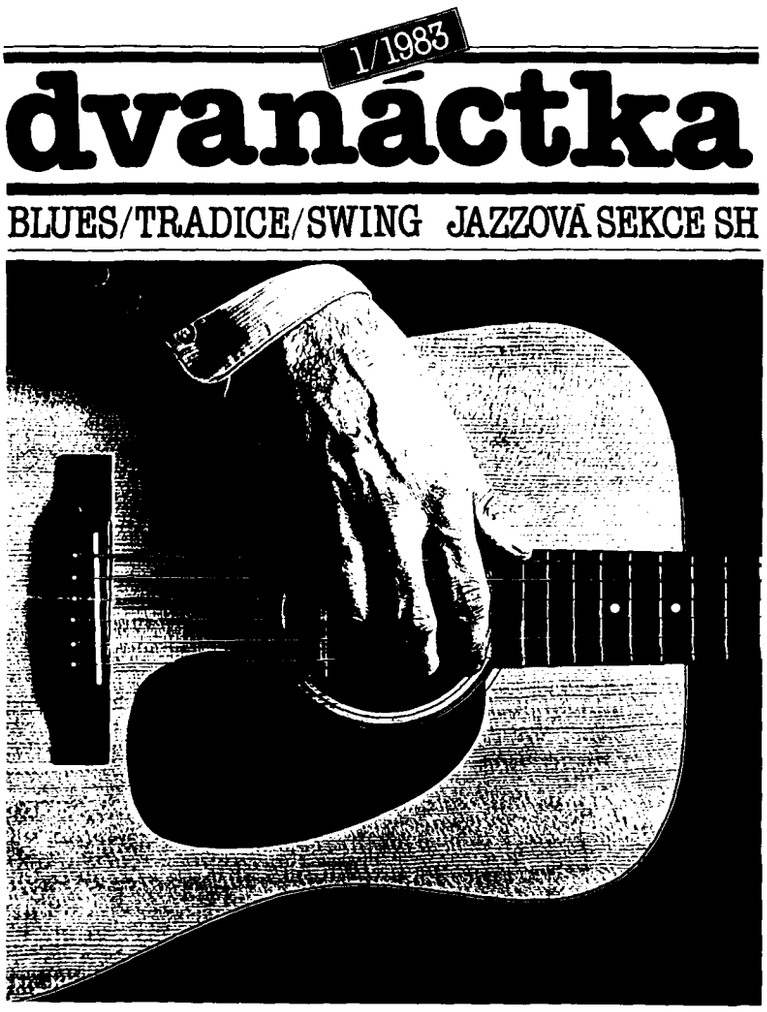
ers, the strange looking holes in the earth, the publicly performed self-tortures, and so on. I feel reasonably sure that rank-and-file jazz fans did not particularly care for such artifacts, but these things have always existed not only for their intrinsic value, but also to *épater les bourgeois*. Whereas the bourgeois, that splendid liberal creature, that basis of every decent society, grew tolerant after the initial shock, the Nazis and the Communists have never ceased to see red at the sight of a woman's face painted in profile with her eyes *en face*, unless it was found in the pyramids. I am reasonably sure that, although the fans may not have particularly savoured the rusty-wire cum smelly-eggshells still lifes, they enjoyed the fact that the concoctions were veritable apples of Eden, gathered in violation of God's law by the industrious gardeners of the Jazz Section to *épater les Communistes*.

The *Jazzpetit* series was more diversified. It included, for instance, an anthology about New York's *Living Theater* compiled by Jaroslav Kořán, the well-known translator of Ernest Hemingway, Kurt Vonnegut, and other American writers; another anthology on *Minimal + Earth + Concept Art*, edited by the Section's chairman, Karel Srp; a sophisticated essay, *The Body, the Thing, and Reality in Contemporary Art*, by Petr Rezek; a beautiful monograph of the photographic oeuvre of the leading pre-war surrealist painter Jindřich Štýrský; a book-length study of E. F. Burian, a pre-war Communist jazzman (he published the first Czech book on jazz in 1931) and stage director which, due to the Marxist but not really existing socialist approach of its author, could not find an official publisher; a fascinating study of how the Jews of the Terezín ghetto, facing death, managed to lead a far more cultural life than the Wagner-adoring Nazis could ever boast of, entitled *Music of the Theresienstadt Ghetto* by Ludmila Vrkočová, deemed also too controversial (probably Zionist). There was a book on John Lennon, edited by Tomáš Kraus and Lubor Šonka, with a series of photographs of the John Lennon Wall in Prague, another spontaneous creation of youngsters, covered with graffiti of grief, which the police smeared with whitewash every night, and which the Lennon mourners repainted every day. There was *Czech Rock 'n' Roll* by Vladimir Kouřil, a history of rock music in Czechoslovakia that even contained photographs of stars who left the country without permission, and therefore became non-persons. There was a two-volume dictionary of American rock musicians, *Rock 2,000*, by Josef Vlček, the second volume of which was eventually seized by the censors. There was an essay on Gary Burton which included a discography.




By an irony of fate the whole enterprise climaxed where the loophole allowing membership publications had once started: with a book by Bohumil Hrabal. The post-invasion establishment managed to break this old man of Czech nonconformism, forced him to give a recantatory interview, and then permitted the publication of carefully expurgated editions of the writer's least controversial works. Still, there were a few manuscripts which the master refused to have disfigured, among them the hilarious novel *I Waited on the King of England (Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále)*. And that's where the Jazz Section came to help. The book was issued in a handsome, large size, for-members-only paperback; and the conforming nonconformist gratefully dedicated the work to the "Readers of the Jazz Section so that they may have some fun." The longhand dedication, printed in facsimile, appeared on the title page, and the cup of the cops' tolerance overflowed. Hrabal was called to order, he was threatened that if he continued to commit such rascalities no more books of his would be published. He was allegedly forced to sign a statement claiming that the Section had published the novel without his knowledge. The facsimile dedication was left unexplained. But logic has never played an important role in the statements of the victims of the arrogant stupidity of power.

Finally Karel Srp edited a book on *Graphic Music and Phonic Poetry*, and all cups overflowed. The Ministry of Culture received an order to put an end to this outrage—remember, it was the Musicians' Union, a province of the Ministry of Culture, and not the cops, which had brought the Section to life. So the Ministry commissioned a number of Marxist analyses of the shocking book to serve as scholarly arguments for the



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banning of the organization; some of the Gray Zonists, I'd like to think, secretly hoped that at least some of the arguments might be used to save something from the wreckage. Indeed, some readers' reports contained very Marxist arguments. A Václav Cutych, for instance, wrote:

> Are you serious? A specialist's analysis? Why organize a wise men's dance around goose-shit? Doesn't the Music Department of the Ministry of Culture have more important things to do than prepare "specialists' analyses" of what should be clear at first glance to every man in his right mind, not to mention educated Marxists. One could say that what we are here concerned with are negligible stupidities if they did not have a clear and transparent political background. One knows, doesn't one, what IS the Jazz Section, WHAT it is engaged in, to WHOM it addresses its publications, and what are its REAL aims.

Obviously the conspirators in the Ministry, if any, could not use this argument.

THE PUBLISHING activities of the Section were one factor in the deepening drama. The other factor, as I said before, was the emergence, in the mid-'70s, of jazzrock, the consequent shifting of the Section's interest from pure, orthodox jazz to hybrid forms, and finally, under the pressure of events, to rock.

Parallel with this development ran a gigantic rise of interest in the Section's activities. True, new members could be accepted only if someone dropped out, but the 3,000 possessors of the bulletin *Jazz* and of the volumes of *Jazzpetit* did not keep them to themselves. According to conservative estimates, each volume had about 100,000 readers. It was not exceptional for one especially appealing title to be read by the entire student body of a high school (as well as most of the teachers) even if only one of its students was a Section member. The attendance at the Prague Jazz Days also multiplied; in the end some 15,000 people bought tickets and listened to jazzrock, New Wave, Rock-in-Opposition, and Modern Jazz. After various molestations and much bureaucratic chicanery, after the prohibition of any mentions of the Jazz Section in the media, the Jazz Days were finally banned—characteristically neither by the Ministry of the Interior nor by the Ministry of Culture, but by an "individual," the Prague cultural inspector František Trojan, under the pretext that "public disturbances" were expected.

INDEED, they were to be expected, for the ban came on the eve of the event, when several bands from abroad were already in town, and thousands of young fans from distant country villages had already arrived in Prague, some bivouacking in the city's parks. In hastily printed leaflets the Section explained the situation to the enraged crowds of youngsters and asked them to abstain from any display of anger. Miraculously, measured by Western standards, the crowd (which contained quite a few punks) maintained discipline; the disturbances for which the cops yearned with all their hearts did not take place. But the Section had to give money back to many patrons and pay the foreign bands. This resulted in financial difficulties which opened a new road toward a "legal" method to curb and eventually to stop the Section's endeavors. The cops used this road a couple of years later.

After the canceled Jazz Day, the Section committed another grave sin. Instead of making appeals to "above," it asked for support from "below," and it got that support: in letters, in proclamations, in bold display of the Section's statements on billboards in high schools and in the club rooms of the Socialist Union of Youth. Graffiti even appeared on the walls of the Ministry of Culture, with the challenging exclamation: WE SHALL NOT LET YOU KILL THE JAZZ SECTION! (JAZZOVOU SEKCI NEDÁME!) And the Section made another clever and provocative move which further complicated the life of the bureaucrats. It applied for membership in the International Jazz Federation, which is an organization of the Music Department of UNESCO—and it was admitted. The Ministry of Culture did not recognize this membership, arguing that the application had not been accompanied by the Ministry's recommendation. Yet the statutes of UNESCO do not require any such thing; the Section was definitely a member. And to ban a group that is part of an international organization is naturally much more difficult than to liquidate a pest that is only domestic. Very probably the UNESCO affiliation also prolonged the Section's life.

Caught unprepared, the Ministry again resorted to chicanery. It started denying exit visas to the Section's delegates to international meetings of the Jazz Federation. It began to spread rumors that the jazz fans were "subsidized from the West." It even mailed a fake announcement to all county councils according to which the Section had been abolished by the Musicians' Union. It didn't work. And so, since the Interior Ministry still did not want to interfere directly, since the Cultural Ministry was unable, and the Musicans' Union unwilling, to perform the killing, eventually the party itself had to rush in.

IT DID SO by launching a campaign of defamation which was to prepare ground for the final "administrative measures." The campaign was triggered by an article in the party's politico-cultural weekly, *Tribuna*, in March 1983. The article was titled "New Wave with an Old Content" and was signed by one Jan Krýzl, in fact a pseudonym hiding the identity of two Interior Ministry employees. It tried to sound knowledgeable but it didn't quite succeed; it became, rather, a source of amusement for the Section's thousands of supporters. Then the Section itself made another unorthodox move. It started yet one more series called *Dokumentry (Documents)*, which included a pamphlet in answer to Krýzl, entitled *Rock on the Left Wing (Rock na levem Křídle)*. With elegant doses of irony, the booklet corrected the many mistakes of the Krýzl twins, from subtleties apparent only to the initiated to gross errors in dates, critical judgments, and personalities. Krýzl, for instance, presented Pete Seeger as a famous rock star of the early '50s, which should be enough to give the American reader an idea of Krýzl's qualifications. The cops also gave their own original interpretation of the punk phenomenon. Punk rock, it appeared, was the invention of capitalist manipulators who intend to implant in young people's minds the conviction that one should identify with life under capitalism and not revolt.

This display of Marxist thought gave the Section an opportunity for a counter-offensive. It was not difficult to prove that punk rock started as genuinely proletarian music, created not by the sinister plotters of some British Tin Pan Alley but by unemployed amateurs. Rock had always been a left-wing phenomenon, claimed the Section. In the concluding lines of the pamphlet, its writers accused Krýzl of the gravest sin a Communist can commit: of spreading right-wing concepts, and therefore "harming the



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interests of the Communist Party."

I OFTEN wish Westerners would know "small" languages, such as Czech. If they could read the debate that followed this clash of minds, they would shed all illusions they might still have about the quality of intellectual life under *reálný socialismus*. The term itself, coined by the French Communist Party after the Soviet ambush of Czechoslovakia, has implications that are quite horrifying to socialists. The correct translation is "really existing socialism," suggesting a parallel to Marx's old distinction between "utopian socialism" and "scientific socialism," which was the only way, according to Marx, of achieving utopian ideals. But the parallel is false. In Czechoslovakia the term "really existing socialism" became the official description of the status quo in party documents. It was introduced after another term had been officially accepted in the late '50s—*dovršený socialismus*, "accomplished" or "realized" socialism, which indicated that the first phase on the road toward the ideal paradise of communism had been scientifically reached, to be followed shortly, perhaps in that generation's lifetime, by the scientific establishment of communism. In actual fact, what followed "realized socialism" was a gruesome economic and intellectual crisis which prompted Communist reformism; it paved the way to Dubček's attempt to square the circle and to the Soviet invasion, after which "realized socialism" quietly metamorphosed into "really existing socialism," also achieved scientifically but with no utopian vistas of communism mentioned any more.

But to define a police state as "really existing socialism" is tantamount to confessing that socialism can really exist only as a police state. Many people may resent me for saying this, but if *this* is socialism, then it "really existed" once before: in the National Socialist State of Germany. Whatever ideological differences may have existed between the two totalitarian movements, there is ample but largely ignored evidence that there were indeed many ideological similarities. The Nazis and the Communists were deadly competitors for the leading role in combating a common enemy—Western democracy and the fruits of its culture. Jazz was to both of them the degenerate outpouring of either barbaric or sick minds belonging to either a wrong race or a wrong class, or both; the anti-jazz exhortations of Dr. Goebbels do not differ in tone, knowledge, or argument from the effusions of Gorodinsky's *Music of Spiritual Poverty*, that bible of the Stalinist anti-sax squads. (Interestingly enough, the music produced by the two camps was practically identical, both in its melodic and harmonic structures, and as far as the lyrics are concerned. Remember that quite a few of the dread SA men were former C.P. members, as SA music leader Hans Bajer demonstrated in his book *Songs Make History*. No wonder, then, that among the gems of the Nazi repertoire of songs one finds also a thing like this one: *"Einst waren wir Marxisten, Rotfront und SPD,/ heut sind wir Nazionalsocialisten, Kampfer der NSDAP!"* "We used to be Marxists, Red Frontists and SPD,/Today we are National Socialists, warriors of the NSDAP!")

Unfortunately these similarities are not a thing of the forgotten past. The *Tribuna* campaign against rock demonstrated that totalitarian thinking, and the resulting diction, is common to all who believe in the iron rule of any sort of party. Here is one of the many letters published in *Tribuna* after the debacle of the Krýzl article. A comrade Beran writes that the punks appear to him as "animals that bear only a superficial likeness to human beings." This very phrase, of course, was frequently used on the pages of *Der Stürmer*. This is how Jews appeared to *Parteigenosse* (comrade) Streicher. And the final solution offered by Beran's friends, whom he quotes in the article, is this: "Command these crowds of half-wits, adorned with their cow bells and chains, to form columns and make them march in the direction of the foundries of Kladno, Ostrava, Košice!" In these foundries, particularly in Ostrava, many workers are political prisoners. The playwright Václav Havel was one, until recently. All that is missing from the recommendation is a suggestion to build showers for the arriving humanoids.

Another righteous contributor to the witch-hunt revealed that a group which "shone brightly" at the Festival of Political Songs—a musical nonevent sponsored by the establishment—was Janus-faced! As the law bid them, the musicians at the festival performed and sang beautiful anti-war and anticapitalist songs for the jury. (There wasn't


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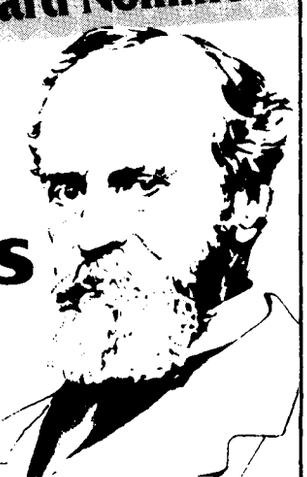

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much of an audience.) At a gig after the festival they outdid themselves playing ugly, high-decibel New Wave rock, indulging in "indecent songs." Of course this is an age-old trick of all people living under repressive governments. As far back in history as ancient Rome, for example, not all Christians were ready to let themselves be devoured by the lions. The not-so-courageous secret members of the sect bowed to the statues of the pagan gods by day, and by night they crawled into the catacombs to worship the God they really believed in.

One group that was willing to expose itself to the lions' teeth was the legendary Plastic People of the Universe, whose English-singing vocalist was Paul Wilson, the translator of my novel *The Engineer of Human Souls*. In 1976 they were all put on trial charged with "creating public disturbances" and "singing indecent songs." Sentences of a year and a half in jail were meted out to them, and Paul was expelled from the country. The Canadian Ambassador might have asked disagreeable questions about the legality of sending a Canadian citizen to jail for singing a ditty that included the noun "shit."

The charges centered on such nouns. In the repertoire of the group was a song addressed to an anonymous but apparently (self-) important citizen, which culminated in the following lines:

> What do you resemble in your greatness?
> Are you the Truth?
> Are you God?
> What do you resemble in your greatness?
> A piece of shit, a piece of shit,
> a piece of shit . . . ,

the refrain repeated eight times. The state prosecutor and the three judges did not indict the insults to the unnamed public personality, but instead the use of the scatological expression. The courageous defense attorney Štěpánek then delivered a learned speech demonstrating that scatological words were common in the life of the working class, that they had always been an indelible part of folk song vocabulary. He cited a seventeenth-century folk song from the collection of Jan Jeník z Bratřic which went:

> He was shitting, shitting, shitting,
> holding on to grass.
> Grass gave way,
> he fell into his shit,
> and smeared his ass.

In the days of the counter-Reformation, that is, at the time of the reactionary rule of the Jesuits, the attorney continued in poker-face style, a Jesuit song-collector changed the lyrics of this song to:

> He was smiling, smiling, smiling,
> holding on to grass.
> Grass gave way,
> he fell and hurt himself.

He further quoted from the works of Hašek, Chaucer, and other literary luminaries to show that sometimes the word "shit" was essential to conveying the message. The public in the courtroom, represented by proxy by plain-clothes policemen on duty, grew duly enraged, and the judge, ignoring the historical evidence, ruled that the use of "shit" in songs was a criminal offence under socialism; and anyway that socialist Czechoslovakia was not Chaucer's England.

THE JAILING of the Plastic People in 1976 led directly to the emergence of the Charter 77, a petition signed by a group of daredevils from all walks of life which challenged the government to respect the Czechoslovak Constitution. Far from respecting that piece of paper, however, the Government clamped down on them, and sent some to jail—among others, the playwright Václav Havel, who got four and a half years and barely escaped death in prison. Still, the cops were never able to completely eradicate the Chartrists, and so, in 1983, at the peak of the witch-hunt, the group issued an open letter entitled *About Popular Music*. Its main thesis—a very valid one—was that the "controversial" lyrics of contemporary Czech rock are probably the first example since the nineteenth century of genuine folklore, and that they were provoked into being precisely by the irrelevance of the officially approved songs. Although such impotent products flood the radio and the TV shows, they do not appeal to the young, because they do not reflect the reality of Czechoslovakia. They reflect only the cautiousness of greedy hacks eager to make a fast buck while staying out of trouble. No wonder that young rockers resorted to self-help, with the result that *lidová tvořivost* (people's creativity), which for many years had been only a propaganda myth, suddenly became a fact. But a spontaneous fact. And such facts, again, do not have the approval of the people's government.

Then a most unexpected source offered to help. The Critics' Section of the Musicians' Union composed an open letter which they asked *Tribuna* to print. It took several months and, I am sure, countless meetings of cops and functionaries, before the letter—rewritten many times, cut and edited—finally appeared in the journal. It was not presented as originally intended, as a collective opinion of the Critics' Section; it was signed instead by three individuals, Lubomír Dorůžka, Ivan Poledňak, and Peter Zapletal. They are the three most eminent jazz musicologists and folklorists in Czechoslovakia, and have a long list of scholarly books to their credit. Their main thesis—also an easily documented one—was:

> We indulge in cultural protectionism. . . . We indiscriminately refuse any influences from the outside; but if such influences are strong they will penetrate our defences anyway, and then we are not prepared. . . . We care too much about nobody stepping out of line (and this line usually expresses only the average taste), about not making a mistake, about not introducing something improper, incorrect. . . . It is a big question whether the present attack on the ideological diversion by rock music is as effective as it is loud. The main direction of this ideological diversion can be found not in the form of rock "excesses" but elsewhere: it is realized by the mass and frontal operations of the bourgeois model of culture and music, by accepting bourgeois taste, by supporting the production of cheap and commercial pop songs which benumb people and divert their attention from the problems of life.

This is as far as you can go in a totalitarian state if you want to tell the plain truth, using the obligatory party jargon ("bourgeois" instead of "bad" or "kitchy"). The critics ended their exposé with what sounds—and was, I think, meant to sound—like a warning: "The generations that follow one another identify quite strongly with the music of their youth, and it remains their music throughout life." In other words: if you make enemies of young people by suppressing the sounds they love, they will hate you until their dying days.

Such observations may be true, but they lack the *conditio sine qua non* of "Marxist" analyses: the "class" approach which, for a ruling Communist Party, is more important than any truth, than any reality. That was the line taken by the authors of *Tribuna's* re-



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ply to the critics, Jiří Janouškove and Jiří Kohout. They opened with a categorical statement: "Art is Party—and class—conditioned. There can be no discussion about that!" Such an opening, naturally, precludes any discussion; and the rest of the article boiled down to a ritual restatement of well-known Stalinist dogmas. Reading their reply, one comes to the conclusion that the government and its repressive policies are not at all responsible for the widespread acceptance among the young of degenerate punk rock, for the general anti-establishment mood of the young generation. The responsibility rests with—guess who?—what they call "Western Diversion Centers," which apparently commissioned the creation of jazz, rock, and similar abominations for the special purpose of undermining socialism. (If this is correct these Diversion Masterminds must be geniuses.) In fact, I know of only one government-sponsored attempt to create a type of modern pop music that would counteract American rock. It took place in East Germany, and never got off the ground.

Still, not even this could stop the rescue attempts. A thoroughly unexpected source of aid came from what I believe are the Gray Zonists at the Ministry of Culture itself. True, the publisher of the brochure is identified as the Theatrical Institute in Prague; but why would theater people bother about *Entertainment Music in the Czech Socialist Republic, its Values and the Preconditions of its Social Effectiveness?* (What a peach of a title!) Besides, the text bears the indelible stamp of the Ministry's ponderous writing style. It is yet another rephrasing of the few early letters in *Tribuna* and of the critics' article, couched in cautious and ambiguous language. It makes frequent use of what Václav Havel once termed "dialectical metaphysics," which is the dialectics of "On the one hand this thing is bad, but on the other hand it is also good." Just one of the pamphlet's many profound observations:

> If we, on any level, in any place of work, are faced with phenomena that work against the interests of our socialist society, we have to deal with them resolutely, but at the same time also sensitively, so that we would not suppress hopeful talents, hopeful creativity which, after proper redirectioning, can have the prerequisites of successfully asserting itself.

And so on.

But the Ministerial brochure appeared too late. By then somebody somewhere had reached a decision, and the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of the Interior finally took "administrative action." First, dozens of rock groups were forced to disband—the most outrageous was the ban of the excellent experimental jazzrock orchestra of Michael Kocáb, Prague Selection *(Pražsky výběr)*. Others were forbidden to perform in Prague. Dozens of musicians were asked to take "requalification exams," which they naturally failed. (Without passing such exams, you cannot perform in public, even as an amateur.) Then the editorial board of *Melodie*, the only pop music monthly, was totally purged. *Melodie* had never openly supported the Section or the punk rockers, but by providing excellent objective information about the world's jazz-and-rock scene it became guilty of the lack of a class—that is, of a party—approach. Since its circulation was enormous, it was a continuous thorn in the side of the really existing socialists.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JAZZ SECTION, KAREL SRP (LEFT) AND ITS GRAPHIC DESIGNER, JOSEF SKALNÍK

The journal's editor-in-chief, Stanislav Titzl (who brought out the illegal, underground magazine *Bop Times* in the early '50s) was fired, along with the other lifelong students of jazz on the staff. They were replaced by one comrade Miroslav Kratochvíl, whose occupation is that of a "professional director." (Just one taste of his kind of expertise: in 1968 he was made director of the newly established *Radio Hvězda (Star Radio)* which purported to be a clandestine station of the "true Marxists" broadcasting from somewhere in Dubček's revisionist Czechoslovakia, but was really filling the air with virulent anti-Dubček and often anti-Semitic propaganda from somewhere in the south of the German Democratic Republic.) His assistant, nicknamed Krahe—for KRAtochvíl's HEmorrhoid—let it be known that from now on a photo on the cover of *Melodie* would cost a pop star 5,000 crowns; Kratochvíl can expect a considerable increase of income. This con artist, by the way, is a Candidate Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and, naturally, an employee of the Interior Ministry. He filled the vacated editorial posts with his colleagues from the Ministry, and for the several hundred thousands of its readers, *Melodie* became a humorous monthly, filled with ludicrous errors and ideological excesses.

The destruction of *Melodie* was only a blow to the flanks. A direct hit against the Section followed. Its dedicated chairman Karel Srp was fired from his editorial job with a printing company on the pretext that a general reorganization had eliminated the need for his post. In Czechoslovakia this is one of the valid reasons to dismiss an employee. But as soon as Srp quit, a new man was hired to fill his old position. In perfect agreement with the law of the land, Srp sued the employer. The judge, a woman specializing in political trials and utterly disinterested in the facts of the case, dismissed it. Since Srp is now unemployed, he not only has no income (there is no unemployment insurance in Czechoslovakia, since theoretically there is no unemployment); he may be charged with social parasitism.



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Moreover, the Ministry of Culture resorted to the proven method of liquidating nuisances. In the old days the trumped up charges at the trials were political. In really existing socialism nondesirables may be attacked for political deviations, but when they are actually put on trial the charges are invariably economic or criminal. The Committee of People's Control seized the Section's accounting books, and one comrade is now busily meddling with them. By a strange "coincidence," as soon as the commission confiscated all bookkeeping documents, astronomical bills for unpaid taxes since 1980 started to arrive from the revenue office. These unexpected taxes, about 3 million crowns, were to be paid immediately from the Section's account, which was closed for all other purposes. The Section could have proven easily that the tax demands were incorrect, but for that they would have needed their books, to which they now had no access.

But the Good Lord (I suppose) intervened again on behalf of the Section. The Section is a part of the Prague Division of the Musicians' Union, and in February 1984 the Division had been told to stop all activities. In fact, the order was an indirect effort to stop the doings of the Jazz Section. But since the decree did not explicitly mention the Jazz Section, the Section carried on. The annoyed authorities sent an explicit command to the Prague Division to abolish the Section immediately. The Division duly responded that having been ordered to stop *all* activities, they could not carry on *any* and could not, therefore, oblige.

EVERYBODY is having fun. But through the laughter sinister rumors may be heard: a trial of the leading figures of the Section is in preparation. As is customary in Marxist states, the sentences have already been agreed upon and approved by the party: fourteen years for Karel Srp; ten years for Josef Skalník, the graphic designer of the Section's publications; and some shorter terms for minor perpetrators of the thought crime. If this proves not to be just a rumor, I would urge all jazz fans in the West, and everybody who is concerned about freedom, to send strongly worded letters of protest to President Gustáv Husák, last known address Praha Hrad, Czechoslovakia.

However it may all end, the efforts by the cops of the Interior Ministry (the true holders of power in Czechoslovakia) to hide behind the smoke screen of administrative measures undertaken by the Musicians' Union, and then by the Ministry of Culture, have failed. Finally the Interior Ministry itself was forced to come out, and on July 19, 1984, it curtailed all activities of the Musicians' Union for three months. This fall the curtailment is to be lifted, if the following conditions are met. The union will stop publishing any books, pamphlets, or periodicals. It will dissolve its Jazz Section. It will discontinue any work, theoretical or otherwise, in the field of jazz music. It will refrain from founding new orchestras, bands, and musical groups. At the time of this writing only God knows how the union will react. And what will remain for it to do, if such conditions are met.

But at least power will have been revealed in its nakedness.

I HAVE written this article for those who share my view that if what exists in Czechoslovakia is socialism, I would rather be a capitalist. But I am aware that many in the West are always ready to give the benefit of a doubt to any regime that calls itself socialist, except to national socialism, which was discredited because it lost a war. I also know that anyone who is no longer ready to give the socialist cops the benefit of a doubt is likely to be labeled a reactionary, and that the jazzmen and rockers of whom he writes with sympathy will (perhaps subconsciously) become suspect of antisocialism, indeed of fascism, or worst of all, of pro-Americanism. In an article entitled "What it's like making rock 'n' roll in a police state" (*Musician*, February 1983) my translator Paul Wilson recounts his experience in London, soon after his expulsion from Czechoslovakia:

> It was in the summer of 1977 and punk rock was in full swing, joyful exuberance in grimy clubs, mindless weekend punch-ups on Sloane Square, instant analysis in the *New Society*. The same bands that the Plastic People had been inspired by ten years ago—The Velvets, Captain Beefheart—were now being rediscovered. I went to an early Slits/Sham 69 gig where the new Sex Pistol documentary was shown, full of arrests, protests, rage and *lèse-majesté*. Afterward I approached someone in the Pistols' entourage with a suggestion, why not smuggle a copy of the film into Czechoslovakia, give the Plastic People a lift. "The Plastic People?" he responded in a dead-eyed, cocky public school whine. "They're antisocialist. I don't support fascist rock bands. I'd rather send the film to South Africa." Ah yes, images of Sid Vicious smelling his socks to raise consciousness in Soweto. I was sorry I'd asked.

HOW is it really? Are the Czech punks, the thousands of supporters of the Jazz Section, the hundreds of thousand of readers of *Melodie*, all antisocialists?

I have known many, and some of them are convinced Communists even after all the pogroms, which is something I can't comprehend. Most of them are—well, I would say they have no interest in capitalism, only in the freedom it offers. They have, in principle, nothing against socialism, nothing against the system, which is the normal human stance. Only fanatics support establishments wholeheartedly and under any circumstances; surely the many critics of capitalism in the West agree, in principle, with its liberal and democratic structure. The Czech aficionados of jazz and art have nothing against socialism so long as it does not annihilate what they love, which inherently has nothing to do with politics, economic systems, or ideologies, but which may assume political overtones if an oppressive establishment endeavors to crush it. These youngsters are not blind to the advantages even of really existing socialism. Job security, for instance—that is, job security as long as you behave. But neither are they blind to the disadvantages: the arbitrary rule of the police; the lawlessness of the courts; the heavily curtailed freedom of the press, of literature, of the arts in general; the terrible nepotism; the political discrimination called, less offensively, "class discrimination" when you apply for admission to a university, or for a job; the brutality toward those who do not keep their dislike to themselves; the new-class greediness of the *papaláš* in governmental and ministerial posts, self-appointed through the ritual of "elections." Can any decent person, socialist or nonsocialist, really like such such things?

Fortunately there are decent people everywhere, who sin daily against the the orthodox code of socialist conduct. The following story is taken from a letter I received from an amateur rock musician who recently escaped from Czechoslovakia and now lives in the United States. With a group of friends



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he intended to attend a private jam session and lecture in a little village near Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad). As they walked from the railway station to the village they passed a truck that belonged to the State Construction Company. The driver, a typical working-class character, stopped, leaned out of the cab, and warned them: "Boys, don't go there! The place is swarming with them! They've got wagons ready for you, they've got German Shepherds and submachine guns!" By "they" the man of the people naturally meant the cops. But the boys ignored his warning, and were promptly arrested; they were subjected to a long process of chicanery and interrogations which resulted in their fleeing the country.

Was the truck driver a reactionary? He wasn't an antisocialist. He was merely a decent person. A citizen of the Gray Zone. The kind of person who makes life bearable even in states of really existing socialism.

# GREELEY'S GRAIL

## How to Save the Catholic Church
## by Andrew M. Greeley and Mary Greeley Durkin

(Viking, 258 pp., $16.95)

Andrew M. Greeley sat down at his word processor and stared at the blank screen. He was struggling. This was not something Greeley did often. The fiery, Chicago-born priest hadn't become the most prolific writer this side of Isaac Asimov by staring at his screen.

But this was different.

This wasn't some silly piece of journalism he could dash off for *TV Guide*, and it wasn't one of his racy novels either. Those novels with their choppy sentence fragments and their steamy sex scenes. Those novels with titles like *The Cardinal Sins* and *Ascent Into Hell* that in the past few years had made Andrew M. Greeley both wealthy and notorious. No, this was serious business. Andrew M. Greeley was trying to save the Catholic Church.

His Catholic Church.

The Church he loved despite its many, many flaws. Flaws that he had been pointing out, in one forum or another, for years. He knew the bishops could care less about what he had to say. He knew most of his fellow priests thought him a hack. He knew Catholic intellectuals looked down their noses at him. But he wasn't going to let that stop him. He never had before. Along with his co-author and sister Mary Greeley Durkin, he had already decided on the title for this new book. He would call it *How to Save the Catholic Church*. If there was one thing Greeley had learned in his years as a writer, it was that subtlety got you nowhere.

But he was having trouble getting started. His thoughts wandered. An image began forming in his mind. He saw a man and woman, and they were holding each other tightly, kissing passionately. Their hands were all over each other.

Sex, he thought. That's how he could save the Catholic Church. He knew the intelligentsia would scoff at him for putting a sex scene in this serious work. But it would catch their attention, wouldn't it? Greeley had to chuckle at that. Quickly, he began writing: "Consider this scenario," he began. "It is election night, and a man and a woman, key members of the candidate's campaign staff, are with a small group of loyal workers in a hotel suite watching the returns. . . . As the candidate moves to make an appearance in the hotel ballroom, the slightly tipsy staff members begin a round of jubilant embraces. Our man and woman hug and kiss each other and suddenly something happens. Their bodies, alive with sensation, cling together. Their embraces and kisses are filled with a passion unlike the embracing of other jubilant staff members. When they finally separate, both are somewhat shaken. As they move to congratulate the others, they ache to return to each other."

Nice, Greeley thought. Maybe not as racy as "he parted her legs, and as gently as he could, invaded her, deflowered her, reveled in her flesh"—those memorable lines from his best-seller, *Ascent*


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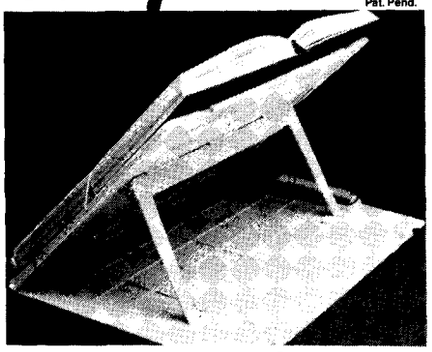

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"THE OTHERWISE URBANE Roger Rosenblatt writes in *Time* that 'religions oppose rational processes' and that religious thinking 'sets heretics on fire, promotes ignorance, inflames bigotry, encourages superstition, erases history, invades nations, and slaughters the opposition.' If that is true, we certainly have a full agenda for Reagan's second term."

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*Into Hell*. But this would do. He could run with this scenario. But where? One of the nice things about being a novelist as Greeley knew, is that when a man ached for a woman who was not his wife, there was always a plot device to keep them out of sin. A plane crash with the man's wife aboard, for instance. Not so in a serious tome about saving the Catholic Church. In a serious tome about saving the Catholic Church, he had to pop the big question:

"What should the couple do?"

But now Greeley had another problem. He knew that such passion was, in its own way, a divine gift, and that Catholics, if properly taught by their priests (which they never were, in Greeley's opinion), should be able to appreciate that. That was the point of the scenario, and the point of his novels too. But without the convenient plane crashes, he didn't really have an answer to the question. So he dropped it. No one would notice, Greeley decided.

BESIDES, he had many other things to say about sex. Andrew M. Greeley always had many things to say about sex.

He thought his Church needed to encourage good sex, partly because "the better Catholics are as lovers, the more fully they will experience God." But Greeley also knew that sex could be a terrific promotional tool. Back in the days when he was a Catholic sociologist—not quite as famous as he was today, but still pretty famous—he had read studies on the subject, and even done a few himself. "In those marriages where the husband considers the sexual relationship satisfactory, he is more inclined to engage in religious practices," Greeley now wrote. The Church hierarchy—Greeley snorted at the thought of those buffoons—why, they were so out of it they probably didn't even know such studies existed. Greeley wrote that down too.

Greeley was just getting warmed up. He thought priests should be trained to become marriage counselors, that Holy Week should emphasize sex, that those buffoons in the hierarchy should "stop issuing statements on sexual morality until they understand the significance of sexual intimacy"—which they never would, in Greeley's opinion. Finally, he wrote that further study was needed. The further study part was, Greeley knew, one of the things you were always supposed to do in a serious book.

His sex chapters finished, Greeley's mind started wandering again. He looked out his window. Just then a woman walked by. She was a little less than average height, with soft honey-blonde hair, a clear cream complexion, and a figure like a nineteenth-century odalisque. "A figure like a nineteenth-century odalisque," chuckled Greeley. He should write that down. He could use that line in his next novel—that is, if he hadn't used it in his last one.

He looked at the woman again, just as she was passing out of sight. Greeley's body stirred. "Ah, God's image," he thought with a smile.

THEN it came to him. Women, he thought. That's how he would save the Catholic Church. He's done the studies—he knew the score. The Catholic Church had "a deeply ingrained, and largely ignored, bias against women." It refused to perceive God as a woman, even though Greeley had figures showing that a high percentage of Catholics occasionally envisioned a female God. It refused to develop a two-career theology, even though its traditional stance—woman as God's housewife—was woefully out of touch. It refused to consider women as priests even though Greeley's research showed that "women were active followers of Jesus." And naked women? "Many Madison Avenue businessmen recognize the sacramental potential of the unclothed body more than Church leaders do," Greeley wrote glibly. Let it never be said that Andrew M. Greeley backed away from sweeping generalities.

Still, Greeley knew his stance put him largely in agreement with feminists—even, yes, some of those otherwise contemptible radical feminists. Well, Greeley knew how to take care of that. "While Susan Brownmiller worries over her desire to have bigger breasts," he wrote, "South American revolutionary women celebrate the disappearance of advertisements that use a woman's body as a sign that the revolution has been successful." Not that this digression had anything in the world to do with saving the Catholic Church, but Greeley knew that a well-placed cheap shot was necessary now and again to prove his independence.

And speaking of digressions, remember Jessica Lange playing the God figure in *All That Jazz*? Now there was a God with sex appeal. And that reminded Greeley of the time when the cretins in the Church hierarchy condemned the movie *The Red Danube* because Janet Leigh wore tights—though she was "considerably more dressed than her daughter Jamie Lee Curtis in movies today."

Nice line, Greeley thought. He would have to find a place to put it in his book.

BY NOW it was lunchtime. Greeley decided to take a walk. Though he was now a professor in Arizona, he still loved Chicago, and spent as much time there as possible. As he walked the Chicago streets, he thought about the old neighborhoods and the old parishes with their flamboyant, alluring rituals. They were the ethnic neighborhoods, of course, but nobody called them that then. Not until Greeley and a few others like his old confrere Michael Novak came along to defend the ethnics from the sneers of the intellectuals. Now the neighborhoods and parishes were dying, and as for Novak—it made Greeley's blood boil to think about it. Novak was nothing but a turncoat liberal. Greeley would have to find a way to put that in his book.

Suddenly he was a hit with a new burst of inspiration. Bring back the neighborhoods! Bring back the parishes! That's how he would save the Catholic Church. He raced back to his word processor.

He could envision the new parish in his mind's eye—and by God, it was a lot like the old ethnic parish, except there were Catholic yuppies instead of Catholic ethnics. It had basketball courts. It had political bosses. It had Catholic schools—yes, Catholic schools. "It was fashionable practice among post-Vatican II intellectual elites to dismiss the Catholic schools as inferior," he wrote.

But Greeley knew better. He had done a survey.

And as long as he was rolling he had a few other ideas for saving the Catholic Church. He'd hire "liturgical artists" to goose the liturgy! He'd get rid of those crappy folk songs that the liberal priests swooned over! He'd bring back the Blessed Virgin in a big way! And saints! Even the ones who turned out not to be real! And angels! And purgatory! And art! Remember when the church built wonderful things like Notre Dame and Chartres? Now that was a church to be proud of. The church has to start commissioning great art again. And he'd get rid of all that social justice nonsense. Only Greeley had the guts to de-



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scribe the Catholic activists as they really were: "angry, screaming crazies." "Pop Marxists." Even in this serious book, Greeley wasn't going to mince words.

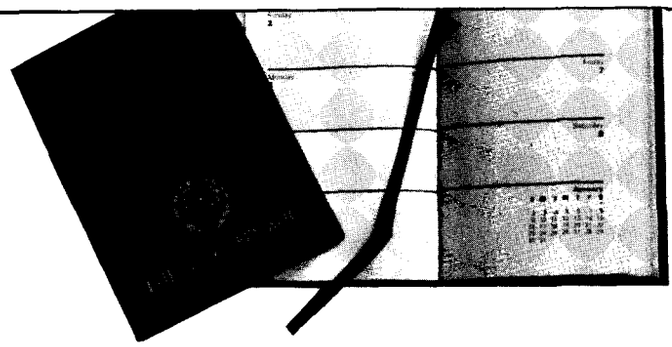
And his novels! If there was one sure way to save the Catholic Church, that was it. He would insist that every American Catholic buy his novels and read them. Of course, he couldn't say it quite that bluntly in his serious book, but he could strongly imply it. It really fried him when he thought about what short shrift the reviewers and the elites gave his novels. Didn't these people understand anything? Couldn't they hear his message? Noooo. "These stories," Greeley wrote angrily, "were explicitly, formally, deliberately, blatantly theological."

Not only that, but everything Greeley was saying in his serious book he had already said in his novels. He'd shown woman as God. He'd proven that sex could be good for Catholics. He'd pictured bishops as the cretins they were. He'd had all kinds of metaphors for the sacraments. And for those idiot reviewers who didn't get metaphors, he had even spelled everything out in an afterword. If the elites and the hierarchy would just read his novels, he wouldn't have to say everything again in this book. The truth was—and Greeley wasn't ashamed to say it—his novels and this new book were exactly the same book.

WITH a final burst at the word processor, Greeley was finished. He looked back over his proposals. He was pleased. In terms of the politics of the church, with which Greeley was acutely attuned, some of his ideas came from the left. Others, however, came from the right. He liked that. "Something . . . to offend all ideologues," he wrote smugly. Professional iconoclasm. What a way to make a living.

He knew what the reaction would be, though. Now Greeley was getting mad again. The bishops? Greeley knew the bishops wouldn't even read this book, much less take it seriously. If the bishops were ever persuaded by something Andrew Greeley said, he thought darkly, he would have to "check with both Lincoln Park and Brookfield Zoos to see whether the other leopards are changing their spots." It made him so mad he decided to put that line in his book.

And the elites and the critics whose thinking was permeated with "half-

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educated pop Freudianism . . . and vulgar Marxism?" Greeley knew all too well what they would say too. He had heard it all before. They would say that there were grains of truth in his writing—they always threw him that sop—particularly on the subjects of sex and women. The Church *did* have a problem dealing with sex. The Church *did* have a problem dealing with women.

But then they would go on the offensive.

They would accuse Greeley of avoiding the big policy questions on sex—celibacy, and birth control, for starters. They would say his book was nothing but a hodgepodge of his own personal hobgoblins—that it contained nothing he hadn't said a dozen times before, that it was less an agenda for saving the Catholic Church than a chance for Greeley to carry the banner for his pet peeves. They would accuse him of shallow thinking, of wild and absurd digressions, of glib writing, of generalizing to the point of losing credibility, and of hurting his own arguments with his inability to resist the cheap shot.

Greeley knew all that.

But all at once it didn't bother him anymore. His spirit lightened. He turned back to the word processor. Greeley had a terrific new idea for a novel. It was about a young American nun with this great bod who gives up her vows to become a Latin American revolutionary. Let the intellectuals sneer! So what if the bishops ignored him?

Fr. Andrew M. Greeley would be laughing all the way to the bank.

**JOSEPH NOCERA**

Joseph Nocera is a senior editor at *Texas Monthly*.

# POETS IN THEIR PLACES

## T. S. Eliot: A Life
## by Peter Ackroyd

(Simon & Schuster, 400 pp., $24.95)

## Saving Civilization: Yeats, Eliot, and Auden Between the Wars
## by Lucy McDiarmid

(Cambridge University Press, 144 pp., $32.50, $10.95 paper)

T. S. Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on September 26, 1888. He died in London on January 4, 1965. In his will he stipulated that he did not wish to be the subject of a biography; an unsurprising attitude in a critic who asserted, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," that "the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates." It is a worthy assertion, but untrue. The man and the mind are inseparable in the end, though there are occasions of reading and pedagogy on which it may be wise to postpone that end.

When a famous poet takes such a stern attitude toward the publication of biographical information, he stimulates curiosity. Perhaps he has something to hide. Michael Hasting's recent play, *Tom and Viv*, suggested that what Eliot wanted to hide was the full story of his first marriage, and most particularly the circumstances in which his wife Vivien was confined, for the last eight years of her life, to a private mental hospital. The documents in the case have not survived, but I see no evidence to suggest that it was Eliot who got the idea of putting Vivien in the hospital, or that he pursued the matter. But *Tom and Viv* has implied that there are dark mysteries in the first marriage, and that Eliot's executors have tried to keep them dark. Again there is no evidence to support this allegation. Eliot's widow Valerie is editing a selection of his letters, so she has a justifiable interest in keeping most of the information to herself for the time being. The letters may appease the public desire for disclosures, the general curiosity to learn what kind of man Eliot was. I suppose a full-scale biography will eventually be published, if only to discourage scandalmongers. But what Eliot would have regarded as an evil day will be a long time coming; his letters to Emily Hale, presumably essential matter for a biography, are under lock and key for many years hence.

PETER Ackroyd's life of Eliot doesn't claim to be definitive; it is a holding operation to assemble whatever is known up to this point. Ackroyd makes much of the fact that

> the man who wrote *The Waste Land* was a man behind his desk, a bank official indistinguishable from other such officials except perhaps for the absolute decorum of his dress, arriving at 9:30 and leaving at 5:30, working one Saturday in four, taking his luncheon at Baker's Chop House with its curved front windows, visiting the wine shop in Cowper's Court with its dusty shelves and corners, a little cog in the machine of Britain's commercial empire.

But he knows that such routines mean whatever we choose to have them mean. Not all poets look like poets, or have the domestic lives commonly attributed to poets. Indeed, Ackroyd shows that Eliot was, for most of his life, a sad fellow, given to depression, a man of low physical vitality—"Mr. Eliot, you have the thinnest blood I've ever tested," a doctor once informed him—and dismally ill at ease with his body. He was always getting sick. He had trouble with his teeth, a double hernia, piles; he got influenza and bronchitis with extraordinary frequency; at various times he suffered from arthritis, athlete's foot, tachycardia, and the emphysema that killed him in the end. He smoked and drank too much.

Ackroyd recites these matters with appropriate sympathy, but when the question of psychic disturbance arises, he seems to go blank. He gives whatever facts he has come upon, but it's still not clear what was troubling Eliot to the point of nervous collapse, what problems made him resort to a Swiss psychiatrist for treatment. His marriage to Vivien was a disaster for both of them, but I don't find that Ackroyd has clarified the connection between the marriage and Eliot's psychic woe. The matter is confounded by the common assumption that Eliot was a cold fish. It



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is true that he sensed the world mostly as a void, and that his feelings on any occasion were liable to turn, without any visible provocation, into disgust. He often seemed to suffer from the disability he ascribed to Hamlet, that of being "dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in excess of the facts as they appear."

My own guess is that Eliot knew his own feelings only to the extent of being terrified of them. He was bewildered by the violence of his feelings, all the more because the violence was intermittent and hideously spontaneous. The obscenity of such fragments of the unpublished *King Bolo* as I have seen is (I assume) desperate therapy. It seems clear that when Eliot advocated the curbing of one's personal feelings, and more generally the discipline and authority of form, order, tradition, and finally obedience to the Church of England, he was himself the first convert he had to persuade. What he represented as a civic and cultural necessity was required, in the first instance, to keep himself from falling apart.

ACKROYD'S book is intelligent, lucid—when lucidity is available—and decent. He is right as well as just in setting aside the rumors of homosexuality. There are a few passages in Eliot's prose which make me feel that his affection for Jean Verdenal was unusually warm, but I agree with Ackroyd that there is no evidence of a homosexual attachment in that case, or in any other. I also agree that Eliot's career as a poet is accurately represented by saying that "he helped to create the idea of a modern movement with his own 'difficult' poetry, and then assisted at its burial." But there are several matters on which Ackroyd's handling of the evidence is inadequate. Let me mention a few.

Ackroyd mentions a trip Eliot took to France with Ezra and Dorothy Pound in 1919, but he has no details of it; he has missed, it seems, an essay Hugh Kenner published a couple of years ago, "Possum in the Cave," which gives much detail and relates it superbly to the poetry. Ackroyd makes no reference to an episode in 1911 when Eliot visited a museum in the north of Italy in search of a stele which a friend told him he must see; it was called *"La Figlia che Piange."* Eliot didn't find it, but the stirring of sentiments of absence and presence, the subjunctive grief he brooded on, issued however circuitously in one of his most gorgeous poems.

Again, Ackroyd's account of Bertrand Russell's involvement in Eliot's first marriage is insecure. He reports a matter well enough documented—that Russell once put aside his paternalistic concern for Vivien to the extent of seducing her, or possibly accepted her offer to be seduced. Did Eliot know of this episode? Probably; in any case he had already agreed to Russell's plan, shortly after the marriage in June 1915, to bring Vivien to Torquay for a few days while Eliot was busy teaching. Ackroyd thinks it was naïve of Eliot to accede to the Torquay trip. I think Eliot may have found it a relief, and perhaps a perverse pleasure, to hand Vivien over to the old goat, with whatever consequences. Ackroyd links the second episode with a conversation Eliot had in a taxi with Virginia Woolf, a Pinterish occasion on which Mrs. Woolf said "Missing trains is awful," to which Eliot replied, "Yes. But humiliation is the worst thing in life." A reference to Russell? I very much doubt it. The conversation took place on March 20, 1921, nearly six years after the marriage, five-and-a-half after Torquay, and nearly four years after the seduction. Besides, I can't see Eliot opening such a can of woes in a taxi.

Ackroyd's way with evidence is often questionable. "He was, he told Virginia Woolf, interested in externals." Surely an odd remark. The evidence for it is in Mrs. Woolf's diary for September 20, 1920, giving the gist of a conversation with Eliot about Joyce:

> A personal upheaval of some kind came after Prufrock, & turned him aside from his inclination—to develop in the manner of Henry James. Now he wants to describe externals. Joyce gives internals. His novel Ulysses presents the life of man in 16 incidents, all taking place (I think) in one day.

It's still not clear. But it becomes clear when you see Leonard Woolf's account of the same occasion, in his *Downhill All the Way:*

> Virginia one evening tackled him [Eliot] . . . and told him that "he wilfully concealed his transitions." He admitted this, but said that it was unnecessary to explain; explanation diluted facts. . . . What he wanted to do was to "disturb externals."

Now we have it. But Ackroyd should have done the work for us. And, by the way, he should not have relied on his memory to report what Eliot, in a famous review, said of *Ulysses*. According to Ackroyd, Eliot "noted that Joyce's great conception had been to use myth as a method for bringing order to the contemporary world." Not so. What Eliot wrote was that Joyce's method "is simply a way of controlling, or ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." I think Ackroyd has rushed to complete his book. Otherwise he would have taken time enough to reflect that Eliot's dealings with Milton are not accurately described by saying, of his second lecture, given to the British Academy and again at the Frick Museum in New York, that "he recanted his previously low opinion of the poet." The remark is inaccurate and in any case uninformative. "In January 1936 he lectured in Dublin." To what audience? What did he talk about? Did it go well?

The book will do well enough until a better one turns up; better in the sense of richer, more detailed, more accurate. But Ackroyd's general sense of Eliot is entirely fair.

LUCY McDiarmid's book is a study of Yeats, Eliot, and Auden in relation to one concern, that of making an impact and perhaps of saving civilization. It touches upon such matters as the audience for modern poetry—should it be learned or, as Eliot sometimes liked to dream, totally unlettered? It raises questions about political engagement; the social and political consequences of poetry; poetry in the theater; the notion of a clerisy, the high people on which a culture may—or may not—depend. McDiarmid deals justly with these issues, but she hasn't come up with anything new. The main problem is that her three poets are very different.

**CHALLENGE YOURSELF**

*International Christian Youth Exchange seeks youth (16-24) committed to social justice and intercultural awareness for year-long service or secondary school experience abroad. Past service situations include working with disabled persons in Belgium, women's rights organizing in Costa Rica, construction work in a Bolivian Indian village, and anti-nuclear work in West Germany. College credit and some scholarship aid available. International exchangees also placed with host families and community service organizations in US. Contact ICYE, 134 W 26th St., Room 400-R, New York NY 10001; 212-206-7307.*



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Yeats, frantic in his rage to suppress the middle class from which he sprang, projected an impossible vision, a dream of the noble and the beggarman in deep communion. Lady Gregory and her tenants, shall we say—anything, rather than the hated middle class. When it suited him, Yeats disclaimed every political or public ambition: "We have no gift to set a statesman right," he protested when asked for a war poem. But he offered to set statesmen right whether they asked for his guidance or not.

Eliot pleased himself with the dream of speaking directly to the people. His exemplar of intelligence in communion with a common audience was the music hall artist Marie Lloyd. But he knew that his readers were an elite; he didn't foresee *Cats*. He was interested in reflecting upon "the social function of poetry," but not in any expectation that the influence would be direct or tangible. He thought, rightly, that the poet could try to maintain the vitality of a language; he hoped to do what he could to keep English up, anticipating Allen Tate's assertion that the poet's only public responsibility is to the language in which he writes. As for Auden: he mostly thought of poetry as an exemplification of decency, good manners, civility, and good humor. I don't imagine he thought a poet should offer himself as a Kissinger, or otherwise whisper in the ear of power.

But there is more to the matter than this. I have been persuaded, notably by Richard Poirier, that at least for a few years Eliot deployed the difficulty of his poetry as a method of mobilizing a body of correspondingly equipped readers, and that "difficulty," in that case, is an instrument of power. The idea of seeking power by that method now seems so fatuous that I'm driven to wish that Eliot had offered his program in terms of pleasure, and left the urge for power to be appeased by some innocuous activity. Shelley did much damage in speaking of poets as unacknowledged legislators: an open invitation to look for ways of getting acknowledged. It would have been far wiser if he, too, had pointed poets toward diversities of pleasure and let power take care of itself. We would then be free of the embarrassment of having poets seek to influence the direction of affairs. If Ezra Pound had regarded himself as a composer, he would not have broadcast for Mussolini; or if he had, he would have done it in a strictly private capacity. Would poetry lose anything if poets offered their poems as nuances of pleasure, featuring indeed the superior happiness of intelligence and imagination?

It is a melancholy fact that the poets who, in our century, have moved directly into the public world, and commented on its procedures, have been, more or less, fools; far less intelligent, certainly, than the average journalist. Mostly they haven't known what they've been talking about. Besides, poets can't save civilization. If they feel the urge to save it, they should sit down quietly till the mood passes. The only thing a poet should propose to do is to write poems. If they're good, and if he's lucky in their recognition, they become constituents of the civilization it is other people's business to save. Even then, civilization doesn't need to be "saved." Certain constituents of certain cultures need to be remembered, so that the existence of these things may encourage people to produce new things, live objects unintimidated by the hard conditions from which they are produced. The trouble with McDiarmid's book is that it leaves unrebuked an ambition in modern poets which should never have arisen and which, even now, should be set aside.

**DENIS DONOGHUE**

Denis Donoghue is the Henry James Professor of English and American Letters at New York University. His most recent book is *The Arts Without Mystery* (Little, Brown).

# STELLAR EXPLORER

## Eddington: The Most Distinguished Astrophysicist of His Time
## by S. Chandrasekhar

(Cambridge University Press, 72 pp., $12.50)

As Professor S. Chandrasekhar reminds us in the subtitle of his elegant slim book, Arthur Stanley Eddington (1882-1944) was widely held to be the foremost astrophysicist of his time. In recent decades, well before last year's award to Chandrasekhar of the Nobel Prize in physics, the same characterization could well have been applied to the author. The book consists of lectures he was invited to give at Trinity College, Cambridge. They must have given considerable satisfaction not only to the audience but to the author; Trinity was where Chandrasekhar did his early work in the shadow of Eddington, before coming to the University of Chicago in 1937.

Although he doesn't tell the story here, the 21-year-old beginner quickly became embroiled in a long-running scientific dispute with the formidable Eddington. The question was whether the life histories of stars of small and large masses are essentially different. Chandrasekhar made a good argument that this must be the case—the small-mass star going to eventual extinction after passing through a "white-dwarf" stage, which a large one cannot do. Most of the local establishment reacted in horror on this last point, Sir Arthur putting himself on record this way: "Dr. Chandrasekhar got his result before, but he has rubbed it in in his last paper. . . . I think there should be a law of Nature to prevent a star from behaving in this absurd way!" Surely this was just "stellar buffoonery. . . . There must be something wrong with the physical formula used."

One can guess how much courage and self-confidence it must have demanded of the young man from Madras to challenge the Plumerian Professor in print. As it turned out, Chandrasekhar's findings were not only right, but have proved fruitful to this day. Not long after, J. Robert Oppenheimer, working with G. Volkoff, saw that stars, on reaching high enough density, could become neutron stars instead of white dwarfs, a prediction fully borne out since then, not least in the discovery of "pulsars." Moreover, the possibility of the full gravitational collapse of stars first explained the phenomenon of supernova, and then led to the recognition that "black holes" should exist.



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I tell this story in part to make the point that this book can be read for two rather different reasons. There is, of course, a great deal of astrophysics and of its history, topics that will appeal only to those who can move on a rather advanced scientific level. But the other theme is the working of the scientific imagination, conveyed in vignettes of scientists in the nascent phase of creative work, and in the public debates before consensus emerges.

THUS, on the one hand, we hear in detail of Eddington's entry into astronomy, and his founding of stellar dynamics with the discovery that each of the stars in the general neighborhood of our sun belongs to one of two swarms, or star-streams, that are moving relative to each other. This is followed by an account of Eddington's other lasting contributions: his theory of the structure and evolution of the stars; his description of the dynamics of variable stars and globular clusters; his account of the source of stellar energy, which Eddington believed to be in the nucleus years before others were to accept it, even while he drew at once (1920) the right political conclusion: "It seems to bring a little nearer to fulfillment our dream of controlling this latent power for the well being of the human race—or for its suicide." He also turned his genial mind and prolific pen to problems of the state of matter in the vast spaces between stars; to general relativity theory (G.R.T.), including his dispute with Einstein over the "cosmical constant" in the G.R.T. version of the law of gravitation ($G_{\mu\nu} = \Lambda g_{\mu\nu}$); and the attempt to generalize Hermann Weyl's theory of unification of gravity and electro-magnetism.

On the other hand, we are also given the rare treat of seeing, through the eyes of an insider, how chancy and unstructured the process of scientific thinking can be—a complement to the more familiar regime of discipline, logic, and experiment. For example, Eddington's typical path through a really difficult problem is described in the words of his biographer:

> His papers are very clear up to a point, and then at the critical moment they become obscure, to become clear again after the important results have been deduced. There are certainly no logical deductions of the conclusions from explicitly stated axioms and hypotheses.

Like others since Galileo, Eddington was frankly groping his way through the darkness between the perception of a problem and its solution. He diagnosed his own adventurous method of thinking as speculation, limited within the framework of a hypothesis. He warned:

> Distrust of speculation often serves as a cover for loose thinking—wild ideas take anchorage in our minds and influence our outlook. . . . If we are not content with the dull accumulation of experimental facts, if we make any deductions or generalizations, if we seek for any theory to guide us, some degree of speculation cannot be avoided.

And later:

> In science we sometimes have convictions as to the right solution of a problem which we cherish but cannot justify; we are influenced by some innate sense of the fitness of things.

Trained originally as an experimental, observational astronomer, Eddington knew that sooner or later all speculations, even those guided by hypotheses and suggested by one's sense of "fitness," must pass the test of experimental observation. But one part of his stream of ideas—perhaps the most notorious part—went far beyond the immediately testable, and involved taking great risks. In the late 1930s, after his interest had turned to cosmological problems, he could open a chapter of his book with this sentence:

> I believe there are 15,747,724,136,275,002, 577,605,653,961,181,555,468,044,717,914, 527,116,709,366,231,425,076,185,631,031, 296 protons in the universe, and the same number of electrons.

This "Eddington number" (equivalent to $[137\text{-}1] \times 2^{256}$) was the result of a fascination which eventually led to the attempt at a vast synthesis, his uncompleted "fundamental theory."

The main point is this. For the past two centuries, physicists have identified many unvarying "fundamental constants" of nature and measured them with superb accuracy. Examples are the speed of light in a vacuum, the gravitation constant in Newton's law, and the mass and charge of the electron. But each seems to stand alone, with all its many decimal places and proper units. One cannot derive the value of any one of them from the others; some apply to the atomic or subatomic regime, others to the realm of large spaces. To every serious physicist it is still an unavoidable question whether the value of each of these constants was fixed separately by some arbitrary accident, or whether each value is *necessary* because it is connected with the others in some deeply hidden way.

Eddington, with more courage than most, thought that the latter must be the case. With great imagination—some called it daring, others eccentricity—he proposed relationships between the fundamental constants; and by combining them in various products and fractions, he obtained some pure, dimension-less numbers. One of these was the famous 137, whole and exact. It resonated with an ancient thematic desire among some scientists to explain the construction of the cosmos, in all its parts, on the basis of pure number, and so to provide a bridge between the physics of the small and the large, between quantum physics and general relativity theory.

That tantalizing number, 137, was indeed close to the value of $1/\alpha$, the experimental "fine structure constant" (about 137.04), familiar in atomic physics. But we know now that the difference between the values is much larger than the uncertainty in $1/\alpha$. Eddington's number is thus after all not the quasi-Pythagorian key for showing with the aid of whole numbers how all of nature is interwoven. And his untestable prediction of the number of particles in the universe arose from the same general theory of the interrelation of constants. His failure to connect the fundamental theory with convincingly testable conclusions, and its neglect by his contemporaries, apparently became sources of deep frustration. A similar fate befell Newton and others who made such ultimate intellectual gambles. Chandrasekhar quotes the haunting observation recorded by J. G. Crowthers: "In his last years his ghostly pale face was drawn with suffering as he sat in his long reveries."

If the end was bitter, there was much happiness before; and none more than in Eddington's relationship with Einstein. They first crossed paths in an unexpected way in the very middle of World War I. In Berlin, Einstein—37 years old, fairly obscure still, a Swiss-German citizen, hounded because of his commitment to pacifism—had just finished a sequence of papers now called general relativity theory, of little interest to most colleagues. In England, Eddington, a 37-year-old Quaker, was on the verge of internment for his views as a committed pacifist. Through neu-



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tral Holland, Eddington happened to get a copy of Einstein's new papers and at once recognized the radical implications for physics, astronomy, and philosophy. By 1918, writing at white heat, he had published the first full account of general relativity theory in English, and the first of his several influential books in the field.

Eddington confessed he was thoroughly convinced of the truth of the theory, even though the experimental support was still quite small. Others, however, would require the test of deductions of the theory. And so, from 1917 on, in the dark war years, Eddington and a few colleagues in the Royal Astronomical Society began to plan two scientific expeditions to test one of Einstein's predictions: that during a solar eclipse the light from stars beyond the sun would be seen to be bent by the gravitational pull on passing by the rim of the sun. The success of these voyages, announced ceremoniously in London on November 6, 1919, and the unexpected "typhoon of publicity" which followed, were remarkable events in the history of science. They propelled both Einstein and Eddington, contrary to their personal proclivities, forever into the limelight of public attention. It was as if these two peace-seekers in opposing nations had brought a promise from the very stars that a new order would now rule the conduct of nations no less than science itself.

Evidence of the friendship that ensued between Einstein and Eddington appears first in the exchange of letters, now in the Einstein Archive at the Hebrew University. Early on (December 15, 1919) Einstein confided that more tests of general relativity theory were called for:

> In my opinion the red shift of spectral lines [owing to the effect of gravity on light emission] is an absolutely necessary consequence of Relativity Theory. If it could be proven that this effect does not exist in nature, the whole theory would have to be given up.

Eddington saw to it that an experimental test was made (by W. S. Adams). The result was positive; but if it had been negative, neither Einstein nor Eddington would have given up. In such cases, confidence and obstinacy are not blown away by one or two "disconfirmations." As Einstein had noted, one would have to wait for proof that the effect does not exist—very different from lack of proof that the effect exists.

Einstein later looked back with great pleasure on his conversations with Eddington during visits to England. Once they spent a whole week together, no doubt talking constantly. But they also continued to differ on the further developments of general relativity theory and field theory. Eddington wrote to Einstein in 1929, "I am afraid you have not converted me." Einstein had little use, in turn, for Eddington's fundamental theory, and he was quite opposed to Eddington's epistemology of idealism and selective subjectivity, the base of Eddington's widely read works on popular philosophy of science.

After Eddington's death, a biographer wrote to Einstein for his opinion on this last point, asking his comment on one of Eddington's typical paragraphs:

> The laws of Nature are not something imposed on an independently existing universe from without. Indeed not only the laws of Nature, but space and time and the material universe itself, are constructions of the human mind. To an altogether unsuspected extent the universe we live in is a creation of our own minds.

Einstein, long a rational realist, registered his disagreement: "Always the conception of the existence of the real world is fundamental in physics." Another correspondent asked Einstein's opinion about Eddington's work as a whole, and in 1953 received this reply:

> In my opinion Eddington's main achievement lies in his theory of the stars. His creative achievements in the fields of relativity and the theory of matter have not convinced me. But this may be my own fault. As Lichtenberg said: "when a head and a book clash, and it makes a hollow sound, that's not necessarily the fault of the book."

This judgment, and the graceful demurrer, seem to me not far from Chandrasekhar's own sense of the balance. But he adds the wise reminder that it is the destiny of a few spirits to push on beyond the safe limits, to test just how high they can fly before the wax melts in their wings.

GERALD HOLTON

Gerald Holton is Mallinckrodt Professor of Physics and professor of the history of science at Harvard University. His most recent book is *The Scientific Imagination: Case Studies* (Cambridge University Press).

**TRB**, *from page 6*

man being above all. Unlike other societies of the past and present, we are not social engineers who subordinate the individual to the perceived good of society as a whole.

Unfortunately, this ennobling premise is essentially false. No society, even the best, can avoid social engineering. You know it's a statistical likelihood that 2.47 workmen will die building a bridge, and you build it anyway because you need bridges. American health care, the most extravagant in the world, is nevertheless full of trade-offs of lives for money and lives for other lives. William Schroeder, for example, couldn't qualify for a human heart transplant because he is two years past the cutoff age of 50.

The noble premise, in fact, makes sensible social policy much harder. The Baby Fae operation cost one million dollars. (Less, perhaps, than what the media spent publicizing it.) Even if the baboon heart could be made to work, and even if the cost were greatly reduced, is this the most efficient way to save human lives? And are these baby lives the ones most worth saving? We find these questions unbearable to ask.

Another example. Our national policy about health care innovations is absurd. New drugs must run a regulatory gauntlet so long and so costly that many useful pills are never developed, or only sold abroad. Medical "devices" such as artificial limbs must be approved before they can be used. New types of surgery—the riskiest, most invasive, and most expensive form of treatment—are virtually unregulated. One reason for this chaos is our collective inability to think rationally about when risks are worth taking that could harm a few or could help many.

From the simple rational point of view, it is hard to justify the effort to save Baby Fae, and even harder to appreciate the public emotion that became engaged in it. As it happens, the simple rational point of view is one of my favorites, and often undervalued, in my opinion. Nevertheless, we are a rich enough society that we can afford a sacrament or two. Radical efforts to save a few publicized human lives are not worthless even if they are merely symbolic. They honor a societal ideal that can't—in fact, shouldn't— always be kept. What distinguishes us from the barbarians is that at least we keep it in mind.



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# CAIRO DIARIST

## *Under Construction*

**TAXICAB FARES** neatly exemplify economic conditions in Egypt today. For many years the price for a taxi ride was fixed by the government at five cents for the initial half kilometer, with each additional kilometer costing ten cents. This price was realistic back in the 1970s, when I first lived in Cairo. Money was scarce, and a penny was still worth something. By the end of the decade, however, after inflation hit the city and disposable income rose dramatically due to remittances and the open door policy, more people began taking the same number of cabs, and it became increasingly difficult to find a ride. Year after year, the real price continued to drop and demand continued to grow. Then something happened that would please free-marketeers. Within a period of several days, all the cab drivers abandoned their meters and began to charge what the market would bear—roughly four times the old prices. Today the meters sometimes tick away, sometimes not—in either case they have no bearing on the fare, which is established by convention or, failing that, haggled over by driver and passenger. Taxi fares mix archaic price controls with a wildly unregulated free market. They codify disrespect for the law and turn daily transactions into complex affairs to be negotiated. In a small way, taxi fares signal the economic problems of two eras: socialism under Gamal Abdel Nasser and capitalism under Anwar Sadat. In the view of many Egyptians, they have inherited the worst of both systems.

**ANOTHER GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION** of the problems caused by the uneasy marriage of socialism and capitalism is the wretched condition of apartment houses and office buildings in Cairo. Rental prices fixed during the 1950s have remained virtually unchanged ever since. An elegant eight-room apartment in the most expensive part of town may be rented by the original tenant for $14 a month. The tenant, whose right of occupancy is assured by law and who is also permitted to sublease, can rent out his apartment to a foreign business for $2,700 a month, and pocket the difference. This immense profit goes to the renter rather than to the owner, which means that the owner lacks both the incentive and the means to properly maintain the building. Unpainted exteriors, decrepit interiors, chipped stairs, broken elevators, and unlit hallways are the norm. All too frequently, buildings are allowed to deteriorate until they collapse. Cairo is a city in the process of decay.

**TAXI FARES** and subleasing typify the exotic economic conditions resulting from Egypt's contorted policies. Other symptoms include the consumer subsidies which now devour one-third of the government budget—but which no politician who remembers the 1977 bread riots dares to touch; the absence of internally generated capital; and a staggeringly high birth rate, which crowds about a million more people each year into the tiny arable part of Egypt while prime agricultural lands are being gobbled up for housing and roads. Several Egyptians told me that economics is but one dimension of their country's failures. They point out that social justice, military success, and political stability also remain beyond Egypt's grasp. Disillusioned with the efforts of both the Nasser and Sadat regimes, many of them look for other approaches. Some look to Islam; others, surprisingly, look back to the period of the monarchy before 1952 with a new interest and unprecedented nostalgia.

**TO THE VISITOR**, however, these concerns appear less immediate than the other great topic of discussion in the capital city: infrastructure. When the British laid out the modern city of Cairo at the beginning of this century, they envisaged an eventual population of under a million people. Judging from the latest aerial photographs, demographers estimate the current population at somewhere between 12 and 15 million—and it continues to grow rapidly. As a result, the press of humanity has become Cairo's most ubiquitous problem. Its symptoms hit the visitor in the face. Sidewalks are virtually impassable: parked cars, broken pavement, vendors, and construction materials make them into obstacle courses. Added to this, the crush of people makes it easier to walk in the street, which is where most pedestrians end up.

**CAR TRAFFIC HOLDS** its own terrors, of course. Private vehicle ownership multiplied during the 1970s due to a lowering of import fees, but Cairo lacked the facilities to accommodate all the new cars. Cars were therefore parked wherever it was convenient, trucks made deliveries from across the street, donkey and bicycle carts slowed down traffic on the few large streets, and the result was a daily flirtation with total gridlock. From his first days in office, Hosni Mubarak devoted considerable attention to these problems of transportation, and improvements in this domain stand out as a principal achievement of his regime. Overpasses are being built at busy intersections, elevated highways extend for miles, construction of the subway system goes on around the clock, and police ensure the free flow of traffic by handing out stiff fines. Problems remain, however. The overpasses scar the city and merely transfer traffic jams upward. Poorly refined gasoline gives off fumes that make streets unpleasant and occasionally induce illness. Parked cars will obstruct all forms of transportation until multi-story garages go up in the city center. The quality of life will continue to decline until the entire infrastructure of Cairo is overhauled—including sewers, electricity and telephone lines, major arteries, and public transportation.

**CAIRO HAS ENORMOUS** importance in the political life of Egypt: not only is it home to almost a third of the country's population, but it is the only place where actions by citizens can shake the government. Thus the mundane problems of Cairene life, if not dealt with, may pose a greater threat to Mubarak than the grander issues such as democracy and peace.

**DANIEL PIPES**

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